

FIVE CENTS

# BRAVE AND BOLD

A DIFFERENT COMPLETE STORY EVERY WEEK

No. 64

## DICK HALLADAY'S PRANKS

or Fun at Strykesville



BY W. L. JAMES, JR.

"Trapped!" exclaimed Dilks. "Run for it." But the officers were too quick for them, and springing upon them, threw them to the ground. Meanwhile Griselda was stealing away unnoticed, but Dick caught her and held fast, although she fought viciously, scratching like a wild cat.



# BRAVE & BOLD

*A Different Complete Story Every Week*

Issued Weekly. By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1904, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C. STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.

No. 64.

NEW YORK, March 12, 1904.

Price Five Cents.

## DICK HALLADAY'S PRANKS;

OR,

## Fun at Strykerville Academy.

By W. L. JAMES, JR.

### CHAPTER I.

DICK, THE NEWSBOY.

"Morning papers! *Herald*, *Times*, *Tribune*, *World* and *Sun*! Paper, sir?"

"No. Come round the corner."

"Sir?"

"Come with me around the corner."

"What for?"

"I want to talk to you a minute. Come along?"

"Can't."

"Why not?"

"Biz, sir; must 'tend to biz. Stock on hand must be cleared out, else profit and loss'll bankrupt me quicker'n lightnin'. Can't clear 'em out if I go round the corner gablin'. That's biz."

"What do you mean by that?"

"What—biz?"

"Yes."

"Don't you know?"

"Do you?"

"Cert'nly. Biz is biz, greeny."

"Don't be insolent."

"Ain't. *Herald*, *Times*, *Tribune*——"

"Dry up. You make a worse racket than an escape pipe."

"Dry up when I sell out. *Herald*——"

"How much is your stock worth?"

"Can't tell 'thout a calk'lation."

"Well, calculate, then."

"All right. Four *Heraldses* 16, two *Timeses* 8, three *Tribunes* 12, no *Worlds* nothin', five *Suns* 10. *Heralds* 16 and *Times* 8, that's 24, and *Tribunes* 12, that's 36, and *Worlds* nothin', that's no more, and *Suns* 10, that's 46 coppers, all told, which is the extent of capital I have at present expended in this here risky biz. Discount to the trade, boss. Here's yer chance to start in biz. Buy 'em?"

"Yes. Here's fifty cents."

"Korrek. Four cents change."

"Never mind the change."

"Yes, I do. Four cents change. Here you are, boss. Where's the stock to be deliver'd?"

"To me."

"All right. There you are! Thunder! What did you pitch 'em in the gutter for?"



"Never mind. I bought and paid for them, and have a right to do what I please with them. Let them alone. Now that you have some spare time, come with me."

"Where?"

"Just around the corner, out of the way of the crowd, where everybody will not hear what we have to say."

"Important, ain't it, customer?"

"Yes."

"All right. I'm convenient, as the bruisers say. 'Lead on, I'll follow,' as Ham. says to the ghost, down to the Bowery."

"Come on, then."

"Come on it is. I'm always 'On Hand.'"

They went around the corner.

We had better seize this opportunity to describe the characters whose conversation we have reported.

The one who, when we introduced him to the notice of the reader, was selling the morning papers was, of course, a newsboy.

He was a bright, intelligent-looking boy of fourteen, rather tall for his age, slender and well-built.

The other was a dark man of thirty, with black hair, eyes and mustache. He was very elegantly dressed, and appeared to be a gentleman.

When they had gone a few blocks, and were in a quiet street, the gentleman stopped.

"Now, I suppose you'd like to know why I brought you here?" said he.

"I cave, customer."

"How?"

"I give it up."

"Oh!"

"Let's to biz, customer. I can't afford to stand here when I can sell a lot more papers if I'm spry. Mebbe you will take the next lot off my hands if I'm stuck?"

"Not if I know it. Now, we'll get to business. Do you know Dick Halladay?"

"That's my cog."

"Eh?"

"That's the name I answer to."

"Well, speak English."

"I'll talk United States straight, customer."

"See that you do. Now, do you want a good job?"

"That's me."

"One that will pay well?"

"Bet your pile on that, customer."

"Very well. Will you do exactly as I tell you, if you earn a hundred dollars?"

"Straight as a die. That's a pile of money, customer."

"Yes, a good deal for you to make in a day. The truth is, I have been recommended to you as a lad who is as bright as a dollar, and whose wits are always about him."

"What's to be done, customer?"

"You'll learn, but not from me. You are to go to 129 Amity Street, third floor, second door from landing, and knock. Do you follow me?"

"Straight as an arrow—129 Amity Street, third floor, second door, knock."

"Right. When the door is opened you are to say: 'From Bogardus, for 268.' Can you recollect that?"

"Slick as grease. 'From Bogardus, for 268.'"

"Very well. They will tell you when you get there what is wanted. If you do what they want of you they will pay you one hundred dollars, and to-morrow morning you may go about your business with your money in your pocket."

"Suppose I don't choose to do what they want, after I get there?" said Dick, cautiously.

"Then you can come away again about your business. What do you say?"

"A hundred dollars all to once is slathers o' money, customer, and I think I'll go and find out what I'm to do to pocket the shiners."

"Good. You must go right away, though."

"All right, customer. I'm off like the Black Maria. Will you be there?"

"No. That will make no difference, though; you know the number?"

"129."

"Correct."

And with this last word the gentleman turned around and walked quickly away; and the newsboy, with a puzzled expression on his face, stood gazing steadfastly after him till he disappeared.

## CHAPTER II.

### NO. 129.

When Dick came to consider on the promise he had made, he did not half like it.

He could not imagine what the service could be that he was expected to perform.

Nevertheless, there could no injury result to him, he thought, for going to see about it.

So, as soon as the strange man had gone out of sight, he also went away, but in an opposite direction, and proceeded toward Amity Street.

No. 129, he found, when he arrived in front of the building, was a house of indifferent appearance; that is, it was not a very good house, nor a very bad one, but an ordinary three-story affair, with green blinds, and looking as if a coat or two of paint would do it no especial injury.

After he had taken the bearings of the outside, he went in through the open door and up two flights of stairs to the third floor.



Then he went to the second door from the landing and knocked.

There was a shuffling inside, and voices muttering, and then the door was opened an inch or two.

"What's wanted?" asked some one inside.

"From Bogardus, for 268," answered Dick, remembering his instructions.

The door was opened, and he was seized and dragged in unceremoniously by the collar.

"Go slow!" exclaimed Dick, indignantly. "I'm no rag baby."

"Bogardus—268," said the man. "Take a chair."

And he lifted Dick up and deposited him on a three-legged stool.

"Now, let's know," said the man.

But Dick, before he said anything, first took a survey of the room and its occupants.

The room itself was large and square.

The floor was bare, and the two windows opened on a dirty courtyard in the rear of the house.

There was a bed in the room, and three or four three-legged stools, similar to the one on which Dick was sitting.

The men, of whom there were two, were rough-looking and bearded, and one of them had a scar on his right cheek, extending to his forehead, which disfigured him horribly.

"Why don't you speak, and tell what you're here for?" said the man with the scar.

"No hurry," said Dick, coolly, looking unconcerned and at his ease, although he began to wish himself well out of the place.

Thinking it was best not to anger the two, however, he told them of the interview with the man downtown.

"Now, look here," said the scar-faced man. "I guess it's all right, but we'd better know names. What's yours?"

"Dick Halladay."

"Well, mine's Mr. Dilks, and this here gentleman's my pard. His cog's Mr. Botts."

"That's all right," said Dick.

"Cert'nly. What can you do?"

"Most anything. Sing, dance, whistle, play the banjo, mouth organ, fiddle, jew's harp, or anything."

"Give us an exhibition of your vocal powers," said Mr. Dilks.

"With the utmost agony I am yours truly," as Tony Pastor says. Here goes:

"I'm not satisfied at all, at all,  
With where I am, but could  
I only be where I am not,  
Depend on it, I would."

"What d'ye mean by that? Ain't you satisfied with being here?" growled Mr. Botts.

"'Exquisitely delighted,' as Southron once remarked. 'Say, Mr. Dilks, didn't I do that about as well as Johnnie Fielding could?'"

"Well enough done," muttered Dilks.

"Thought so. Give you some more? Pay attention, and keep both eyes and ears open.

"The next runs thusly:

"I wish I were a tomcat,  
And you were a tiny mouse,  
And we should be the occupants  
Of this old three-story house,  
If I should get right out of here  
And try to escape to sea,  
If you'd refuse to let me go,  
Then gobbled up you'd be."

"What's the matter, Mr. Dilks? You look kind of black around the eyes."

"Gobble me up, would you?" snarled Dilks, looking daggers.

"Swallow down my chum, would you?" growled Botts, looking vengeance.

"The roosters crow!  
The pigs do squeal!  
The calves do loudly bawl!  
Oh! those are the sounds I like to hear,  
There's music in them all."

trolled Dick. "How's that, Mr. Botts? If Jimmie Thayer should hear that he'd never sing again—be ashamed."

Dilks looked highly incensed.

Botts looked mad.

"Roosters crow," said Dilks.

"Piggs squeal," said Botts.

"Calves bawl," said Dilks.

"Calls us roosters and pigs," said Botts.

"D'ye hear that, Dilks?"

"And calves," added Dilks, looking threatening.

"No such thing," said Dick. "I was only singing, that's all, Mr. Dilks. You wanted me, you know. Thought that was the way, maybe, I was to make the hundred shiners."

At this Dilks looked at Botts.

"Sharp," said he.

"He'll do," answered Botts.

"Do what?" asked Dick.

"I'll tell you," said Dilks. "Pay attention. Walls have ears, sometimes. Draw your chair up close."

Dick drew his three-legged stool closer.

"Now," said Dilks, "do you want to make a hundred dollars a little easier than you ever made a dollar in your life?"

"That's me."

"I'll tell you how you can do it."

"Propel."

"By getting in at a window."



"Eh?"

"And opening a door."

"What's next?"

"That's all."

"When?"

"To-night."

"What if I don't agree?"

"Do you see that closet?"

"Yes."

"And this handkerchief?"

"Yes."

"And this rope?"

"Yes."

"Well, the rope'll go round your hands and feet so tight you can't move; the handkerchief'll go over your mouth so tight that you can't make a sound, and you'll go into that closet and the door'll be locked so close that you'll never get out before you're starved to death."

Inwardly, Dick trembled.

He believed that they would have no hesitation in doing as they threatened.

"What do you say?" asked Dilks.

"I'm on hand."

"Then you'll do it?"

"Like a house a-fire."

"I thought so," said Botts. "You're too smart to let a chance like this to make a clean hundred go by."

"I'm always on the track of the shiners," said Dick, with an answering nod to Botts' grimace. "I don't often let 'em slip."

At this Mr. Dilks, having patted him patronizingly on the head, lighted his pipe and smoked complacently, while Botts stretched himself out and went to sleep.

### CHAPTER III.

NO. 268.

After dark Botts went out and bought some bread and meat at a cheap restaurant.

Of this all three ate heartily.

Then they sat down and talked and waited until an old bull's-eye watch which Dilks produced, pointed to the hour of midnight.

"Time to go," he announced. "Come, boy, get ready."

Dick was up in a minute and had his hat and coat on.

"I'm ready," he said.

Botts was, also.

"Come on, then," said Dilks. "Look here, boy, are you sure you're straight?"

"Straight as a loon's leg," said Dick, decidedly.

"Come on, then."

So saying, he led the way from the room, and, having

carefully locked the door, they went downstairs and out of the house into the street.

The weather was not at all like it had been when Dick entered the house.

Then it was clear and light, and the sun was shining; now the sky was covered with clouds, and a fine, drizzling rain was falling.

Keeping Dick between them, they walked for some time at a rapid gait. At length they stopped.

"268," said Dilks.

By the dim light of the street lamps, Dick saw that they were in front of a large brownstone house.

No lights appeared.

All were evidently in bed and asleep.

Dilks looked up and down the street. No one was visible. The policemen were, no doubt, stowed away in sheltered doorways.

"Come on," said Dilks, in a whisper.

There was an opening or narrow alley between that house and the next one, and through this they went into a back yard in the rear of the house.

"Be still as death," whispered Botts, pinching Dick's arm.

There was a back piazza to the house, and they ascended to it.

Dilks took from his pocket a small diamond, with which he removed a pane of glass.

"There's a burglar alarm fastened to the window," he explained, in a low tone. "I darsn't raise the sash, because that would spring the infernal thing and kick up a deuce of a row in there. Somebody must crawl through and go down and unfasten the basement door from the inside. I've been around the house, making believe I was a tin peddler, and found out all about it. They didn't put any alarm to the basement, because they believed there was no use of it, for there's three bolts, two hooks and a lock on it. You're to get through this window into the back parlor, go through that to the hall. At the end of the hall you'll find the door to the basement. Go down, unlock and unbar the door, and let us in. Do you understand?"

Dick nodded.

"Then go ahead. You'll have to go feet foremost, or you'll strike head first on the other side and kick your feet through the window. I'll put you through. Place your hands close to your side."

Dick did so, and Dilks lifted him up and pushed him feet first through the window.

He came down upon his feet in the room without noise.

Dilks put his face to the opening.

"Henry," he whispered.

Dick walked softly away from the window. The place



was dark as pitch, and he was obliged to search at random for the door leading into the hall.

By good luck he soon found it, however, and, opening it, stood in the hall.

On the right, he knew from the direction, must be the door leading into the basement, by which he had been directed to go by Dilks and unbar the door.

Instead of doing this, he went exactly in the contrary direction and reached the main stairway.

Nor did he pause here, but went quickly up and felt along the wall on the next floor for a door.

On this he knocked softly.

No response.

He repeated the knocking a little louder.

"Who's there?" asked some one, drowsily, as though aroused from a sound sleep.

"Come to the door—quick!" whispered Dick.

A shuffling noise, as if the person inside was getting out of bed, and then the door opened a little.

"What's wanted?"

Dick explained.

"They're going to rob the house," he concluded.

"We'll stop that, as sure as my name's Pemberton. Can you shoot?"

"Plumb center," said Dick.

"Good. Then I'll not call the servants. They'd make a racket and spoil everything. Wait a minute."

He went into the room, and returned in a minute with two pistols, one of which he handed to Dick.

"Now, come on," he said. "We will both go into the basement. You unbolt the door, and as soon as they enter we will give it to them."

Dick was in his element; he liked this exceedingly; it would give him a chance to get even with Dilks and Botts for detaining him all day and threatening to starve him to death in the closet.

As still as mice they stole downstairs to the parlor floor, and thence to the basement.

Dick unbolted the door, while Mr. Pemberton stood ready.

"You've been an almighty long time," whispered Botts, as the door opened.

"I couldn't find the way. Come, hurry in, and let me shut the door."

Instead of waiting, however, he retreated to where Mr. Pemberton stood.

The forms of Dilks and Botts now showed in the doorway.

"Fire!" whispered Mr. Pemberton.

Crack—crack! went the pistols.

Botts fell.

With an exclamation, Dilks turned and ran.

Crack!

Another shot from Dick's pistol.

Dilks uttered a cry, but ran on.

He was hit, but not hard enough to stop him.

Dick pursued him out into the darkness, but he turned the corner, ran down the alleyway, across the street into another alley, and was out of sight.

Dick went back and found Mr. Pemberton bending over Botts.

"Dead," said he.

"As a doornail," said Dick.

By this time a policeman, attracted by the firing, came running up.

Then the servants, frightened almost to death, appeared, with white faces.

Then another policeman.

Mr. Pemberton explained.

"Take that carrion away," he concluded, pointing to Botts' body.

The officers lifted it between them and carried it to the station house.

"Now, go to bed, you cowards," said Mr. Pemberton, sternly, turning to the shaking servants. "You come with me," he continued, turning to Dick, "where we can talk this matter over."

They went into the library, where Mr. Pemberton lighted the gas, and Dick told him everything.

When he described the man who met him downtown when he was selling papers, Mr. Pemberton looked troubled.

"It must be——" he commenced; then checked himself, and continued: "No, that cannot be. He would never prove so ungrateful. But, my lad, you use very good language for a newsboy."

"My father was a lawyer," Dick explained. "When he died, I was left without a cent, and as I had nobody to help me, I took to selling papers."

"And you have continued at that ever since?"

"Yes, sir."

"You are too intelligent and are growing too old for that now. You should be doing something else."

"Can't do it, sir," said Dick. "Haven't any money, and don't know enough."

"Ah! You would like to learn, eh?"

"Yes, sir. It has always been my wish to go to school."

"Then you shall go."

"Sir?"

"You shall go to school, if you wish it. I will send you."

"Do you really mean it, sir?" asked Dick, astonished almost beyond belief.

"Certainly I mean it. My boy, Tony, who is about your age, is going to Strykerville Academy in three weeks. You shall go, too. Stay! You shall go before he does."



He is away now, on a visit, and there is no use delaying you until he returns. You shall go at once. Will that suit you?"

"Yes, sir; if you really mean it."

"Of course I mean it. But come, we must go to bed now, and get some sleep. It's three o'clock in the morning."

He showed Dick into a very pretty room, and left him to go to bed, which he did, but got very little sleep; he was so excited, thinking over the change that was about to take place in his life.

A week thereafter Dick, his trunk well filled, and wearing better clothes than he had had for many a year, found himself on his way to Strykerville Academy.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### AT STRYKERVILLE.

Strykerville Academy was situated six miles off the line of railroad, and this distance was accomplished by means of a slow old coach of ancient manufacture and wooden axles.

Into this Dick climbed, after having seen his trunk strapped securely on behind, and in an hour was told by the driver to "tumble out."

"What's the row?" said Dick. "Anything broke?"

"No. Strykerville."

"The Academy?"

"Yes."

Dick climbed out and found himself in front of a gate opening into a kind of a park.

Through the trees a large building could only dimly be seen, for the sun had gone down and it was growing dark.

The driver put the trunk down by the roadside and drove off.

A boy, much larger than Dick, was swinging lazily on the gate, and as he approached, showed no disposition to descend from his perch and allow the gate to be opened.

"Are you coming down off that gate?" asked Dick, sharply, after he had waited a full minute.

The boy adjusted an eyeglass and looked straight at Dick, going over him from head to foot.

This angered him.

Springing back, he darted against the gate at full speed, bursting it open, and sending the boy at full length on the gravel, scratching his face and shivering the eyeglasses into a dozen pieces.

He picked himself up, felt of his bruised face, and regarded the eyeglass ruefully.

"Get out of the way next time," said Dick, "and you'll not get hurt."

"Are you coming to school here?" asked the boy.

"Yes."

"Then look out for me; I'll lick you for that."

"All right. Have it out now?"

"No. Old Scragg would be along and nab us both—oh, I can wait! The fun of licking you will be all the sweeter when it does come."

"Perhaps you won't have as much fun as you imagine," said Dick. "Any time you feel like it, let me know. I'm willing to accommodate you right away, Scragg or no Scragg. Who is Scragg, anyhow?"

"Head master. He's next in authority to the principal here."

"Oh! Well, you don't want to have it out now?"

"No. I'll lick you to-morrow when we can get out of sight. My name is Harper. You'll find me around."

"My cog's Halladay—Dick Halladay. You'll always find me on hand."

"You won't be on hand for a while after I've done with you."

"Don't fret. Make some paste and stick that eyeglass together. You'll need one when I'm done with you. So long, Harper, till to-morrow. Stick a plaster on those scratches; they don't add to your beauty," said Dick, adding, as he walked away. "Have some raw beef ready for your eyes to-morrow, Harper. It's as good as oysters for inflammation."

As Dick walked up to the house he could not see much of the scenery, for it had grown quite dark, and lights were already showing inside.

On the piazza sat an elderly man, who, as he approached, came to meet him.

"Are you Halladay, the new boy?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," said Dick.

"I am glad to see you. I am Mr. Landon, the principal. I hope you have had a pleasant journey."

"Thank you, sir—yes, sir," said Dick.

"Where is your trunk?"

"At the gate, sir."

"I will have it brought up. You will room alone until young Pemberton arrives. Granby!"

"Yes, sir."

A boy about Dick's age came up.

"Show Halladay his room—number 19. Been to supper, Halladay?"

"No, sir."

"You'll get some in the dining hall. You will show him where it is, Granby."

"I will, sir," said Granby, and he led Dick away to his room, where he divested himself of his coat and hat and commenced to bathe his face.

"Granby, who's Harper?" he asked, as he combed his hair.

"Harper! He's the bully of the school," said Granby.



"The bully! What do they call him that for?"

"Because he's bound to have his own way, and licks everybody that don't agree with him in everything."

"Oh. He does, does he?"

"Yes. How did you hear of him?"

"I met him down at the gate."

Dick then related what had taken place at the entrance.

"Gracious!" exclaimed Granby. "I'd awfully hate to be in your shoes. He'll pound you fearfully."

"That depends," said Dick.

"Don't you fight him," said Granby.

"Why not?"

"He can whip two of you. He's twice as big and heavy."

"That's nothing. He can have the chance, if he wants it."

"You'd better let him alone."

"Had I? Let's go down to supper. I'm that hungry I could eat shingle nails."

They went down into the dining hall, which was deserted, the boys having already eaten. Granby left him there, and Dick made his supper alone.

He then went back to his room, and taking off his coat, threw it on the bed.

Snap! went something inside the pocket.

"Those infernal torpedoes!" he exclaimed. "I forgot to take 'em out."

He placed his hand in the pocket and drew out half a dozen large-sized torpedoes and a lump of soft, sticky substance.

"Shoemaker's wax, that I had for waxing that string," he said. "It's lucky that I had it well wrapped up. I wonder where the schoolroom is? I think I'll hunt around and see if I can find it."

Replacing the wax and torpedoes in his pocket, he went downstairs to the first floor, and found the schoolroom at the end of a short hall.

He went in and stayed twenty minutes.

When he came out, the torpedoes and wax were not in his pocket.

"There'll be fun in there to-morrow," said he.

Then he went to his room and went to bed.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE FIGHT—DICK'S PERIL.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Scragg, "our respected principal, Mr. Landon, has been suddenly called away on business, and he has deputed to me the duty of opening the school in his absence."

The scene was in the schoolroom, at nine o'clock on the morning following Dick's arrival.

Dick had entered the room with the rest, and, in default of the place which was to be assigned him, had taken his seat beside Granby.

The speaker was Mr. Scragg, head master, who looked at the boys with a severe expression, as if to say:

"You'd better behave yourselves to-day. I'm looking at you. No nonsense."

As Mr. Scragg concluded his opening address, his expression changed from severity to what is considered a look of benignity, and he rested his long arm on the desk and gazed at the boys contemplatively:

Crack—snap—bang!

Mr. Scragg jumped backward as though he had been shot, struck the principal's chair and rolled over on his back on the floor.

He picked himself up quickly, however, and with a very red face went to the desk and examined it.

"Torpedoes!" he exclaimed. "Torpedoes! A vile compound of saltpetre and gravel stones exploded in my face!—my face! The face of Elihu Scragg, head master of Strykerville Academy! I call upon the guilty culprit to stand boldly forth and declare himself, and be publicly caned before the whole school."

No one stirred.

Mr. Scragg sat down in the principal's chair and mopped his face with a red silk handkerchief.

This operation in a degree restored his equanimity.

"Gentlemen," said he, severely, but with calm composure. "This affair will be allowed to rest until after the morning exercises are over. Then I will discover and punish the culprit in such a manner as will restore and preserve the dignity of the academy intact to the remotest generation."

He took the Bible from his desk and attempted to rise from his seat, but only succeeded in lifting the heavy chair an inch or two from the floor.

A second attempt produced a sound like the tearing of cloth.

There was a suppressed titter from the school.

A ferocious expression came upon his face.

"Gentlemen," he exclaimed, "I am stuck fast! I, Elihu Scragg, head master of Strykerville Academy, am fastened to my chair by a sticky compound which acteth like a mixture of tar and pitch. Who has inflicted this vile indignity upon me?"

There was no response.

"Gentlemen," continued Mr. Scragg, "the vile and guilty culprit must be punished. The dignity of Strykerville Academy must be preserved. I shall publicly cane you all, each and every one."

He raised the lid of the desk and inserted his head to search for the cane with which castigation was usually administered.



A cry, which sounded to the boys very much like an oath, escaped him.

He withdrew his head, and the boys saw a ludicrous sight.

The bald spot on the top of his head was a pool of ink, which ran down in torrents into his eyes and over his face.

It dripped in large drops from the end of his nose and fell on his shirt bosom.

A large bottle of ink had been fastened to the desk lid, and, when it was raised, had inverted and emptied its contents.

Such a yell as had never been heard in Strykerville went up from the boys.

They lost all control of themselves, and throwing themselves back in their seats, laughed and shouted immoderately.

With a gasp Mr. Scragg sprang up.

There was a loud tearing of cloth, and a large piece was left in the chair.

He made for the door wildly.

There was an enormous rent in his unmentionables.

And from the result, as he disappeared, a white flag fluttered wildly.

There was a scene of the most utter confusion in the schoolroom.

Dick and Granby kept their seats.

"Who do you suppose did it?" asked Granby.

"How should I know?" said Dick.

"It's very strange. Nothing of the kind ever happened before."

"Then it's time it commenced."

Granby looked at Dick, suspiciously.

"Blest if I don't believe you did it," he said.

"Keep mum," said Dick.

"Tight as a bottle."

An under teacher, entering, put a stop to further conversation.

His face assumed a very severe expression, but Dick observed a sly twinkle in his eye.

"Young gentlemen," he announced, "you are to have a half-holiday to allow Mr. Scragg to recover from his shock. The disagreeable affair that has just happened will be investigated this afternoon."

He vanished through the doorway.

"That's Mr. Bolton," said Granby. "He's the best one of the lot of them, and he's mightily pleased, only he doesn't dare to show it, you know."

"Let's go out in the air," said Dick.

"Come along."

They went out upon the grounds, where they found the boys busily engaged discussing the affair.

Not one suspected Dick, as he was a newcomer, and they did not suppose he had been in the school before.

Dick and Granby walked up to a small group who stood under a tree. Among them was Harper.

"Hello, Harper!" said Dick, familiarly. "How's the goggle? Got it mended yet?"

"Clear out!" said Harper. "I don't want you to speak to me; nor look at me, either."

"The cat may look at the king—and speak to him, too, for that matter," said Dick.

"And get a licking for its pains."

"Maybe."

"You'll find out if you don't vamoose."

"Will I?"

"Yes, you will. I haven't forgotten last night."

"Haven't you? I should think you'd be anxious to. You didn't cut a very pretty figure."

"You'll cut a worse one if you'll just come out of sight of the academy for ten minutes."

"I'm your chicken."

"A mill, a mill!" cried several boys together. "Go down to the grove and fight it out." They adjourned in a disorderly mass to the grove of maples at the extremity of the grounds.

Granby stuck to Dick.

"You'd better let Harper alone," said he. "You'll get a pounding."

"Will I?"

"Yes, he's a regular bulldog."

"He'll be a cur dog before I'm done with him."

"Well, if it's really to be a mill, I'll back you."

"Thanks. That's what I wanted to ask you. I don't know any of the rest, you see."

"I'll stick to you."

"Make a ring," cried one of the boys.

A ring was made by the boys forming in a circle, and Dick and Harper entered it.

As they stood facing one another, it certainly looked as though Dick would get the worst of it.

Harper was large and stout, and possessed great strength. He was both taller and broader than his antagonist.

Dick was quite slender, as he stood in the ring with his coat off, but he was well-built, and spry and agile.

Harper struck out first.

It was a heavy blow, but Dick sprang aside nimbly and it missed him.

In return, before Harper could recover his ground, he sent in a hot one for the chin.

This staggered Harper and made him more cautious.

Making a feint with his left, he struck out heavily with his right and hit Dick on the forehead.

After this they closed in and struck out right and left,



giving and taking blows that were of very little consequence.

Suddenly Dick sprang backward and, before his enemy could prepare himself, leaped forward, delivering his right and left as he did so.

Harper went down flat.

First knockdown was claimed by Granby.

Harper's seconds called "time."

This ended the first round.

In a moment Harper was up again, smiling and confident.

They faced each other.

As the fighting was about to recommence, some one on the outside of the ring called:

"Run! Bolton's after us!"

Everybody ran in different directions.

"We'll settle this after exercise this afternoon," called Harper, as he ran one way.

"All right," cried Dick, as he scampered in another.

When Mr. Bolton came up he found the grass tumbled badly, but no one in sight.

Dick ran until he came to a large tree, behind which he concealed himself and listened.

Suddenly he felt his throat clutched by a hand from behind.

He turned quickly, and saw the scarred face of Dilks above him.

On the features of Dilks rested a ferocious expression.

Dick struggled to free himself, but Dilks held him fast.

His throat was so tightly compressed that he could neither utter a sound nor breathe.

"I've got ye now," hissed Dilks. "You gave us away, and shot Botts dead, and put a bullet in my back. I've tracked ye away here for revenge, and now I'm going to choke you to death."

He tightened his grip.

Little globules of fire floated before Dick's eyes; he felt his senses leaving him; he was being choked to death.

## CHAPTER VI.

### MR. SCRAGG'S MISHAP.

In despair Dick felt the hold of Dilks tighter on his throat.

His struggle did not avail.

The scar on Dilks' cheek became livid, as his passion sent the blood surging toward his brain.

His expression was one of rage, mixed with satisfaction.

Suddenly Dilks heard a loud, shrill exclamation.

Turning his head slightly he saw a little girl of twelve climbing over the wall with the agility of a cat.

"You bad man!" she screamed. "Let him go! Stop choking him, I tell you!"

All the attention Dilks paid to her was to squeeze Dick's neck the harder.

Then she changed her tactics.

Springing upon Dilks' back she commenced digging her sharp nails into his face until it was covered with blood. At last she passed one of her nails across his eyes.

The pain must have been intense, for Dilks roared like a wild bull, dropped Dick and commenced to jump up and down like a jack-dance, rubbing both fists into his eyes and swearing like a trooper.

The water ran from his eyes in a stream and they were as red as blood.

The girl kept up her screaming loudly; but Dilks was in too great pain to heed her.

All this time Dick lay on the ground insensible.

All at once there was a great rush and tramping as the schoolboys, headed by Mr. Bolton, appeared on the scene.

They had heard the cries, and, knowing that something was wrong, had left their hiding places and hurried to the rescue.

"What is this?" asked Mr. Bolton, seeing Dick lying on the ground and hurrying to him and bending over him. "What is the matter with his throat? Has the boy been trying to hang himself?"

"That wretch there was trying to choke him," said the girl. "He would not let go until I scratched his eyes out. Is he dead, sir?"

"No," said Mr. Bolton, as Dick began to show signs of returning consciousness. "He is recovering."

Until now Dilks had remained rubbing his eyes and howling, but suddenly remembering that discretion was the better part of valor, he cleared the wall with a bound and was out of sight.

Several of the boys started after him, but Mr. Bolton called them back.

"It is useless to pursue him," he said. "You could not find him in the woods. And, besides, it would be dangerous, for such characters always go armed. Let us try to bring back this boy to life."

But Dick, full of vitality, did not need any further attention.

He was already coming round, and now, opening his eyes, he looked about him in a bewildered manner.

"Are you better, Halladay?" asked Mr. Bolton.

"I'm all right now," said Dick, getting on his feet. "Where's Dilks?"

"Who?"

"Dilks. The man who choked me."

"He has escaped. But who is he, Halladay? What was his object? Plunder?"



"No. At least, that was not his main object. It was an old grudge."

"Tell us about it."

Dick told them the story, beginning with the man who called himself Bogardus, and ending with the scene at Mr. Pemberton's house, on the night of the attempted burglary.

"And the fellow, to revenge himself on you for shooting Botts and wounding him, tried to kill you."

"That's it," said Dick, "and he came precious near it, too."

"Indeed he did. Had it not been for the little girl, you would have been dead now, instead of standing here relating the story."

"A little girl!" exclaimed Dick. "I see no girl. Where is she?"

"True. Where is she? I was so touched about you, and interested in your story, that I forgot all about her."

"She climbed over the wall like a kitten, sir," said one of the boys, "just as Halladay came to."

"Do you know who she is, sir?" asked Dick.

"Yes. She is the daughter of Mr. Long, of the 'Willows,' the estate which joins the grounds."

"If you please, sir, I should like to go and thank her for saving my life."

"No doubt the principal will give you permission—you had better move away from this part of the ground, boys; the rascal may be hanging around still. I shall go into the village and inform the proper authorities and organize a pursuit."

He went back to the school to inform the principal of what had occurred, and the boys adjourned to the edge of the grove, where the fight between Dick and Harper had been interrupted.

As soon as they arrived here Harper came swaggering out from the crowd.

"Come, let us finish it," said he.

"Finish what?" asked Dick.

"The mill."

"Not now."

"Why not?"

"Because I'm too weak."

"That's all in your eye. You're no more weak than I am."

"That's not so," said Dick. "And you know it. You know that Dilks choked me till I was insensible, and it's impossible for me to get back my strength all in one minute."

"Gammer. If you want to back out, say so."

"I don't want to back out."

"Then come on."

"Not now."

"Then give up—licked."

"I'll not do that, either. I can lick you easy in a fair fight, when I'm in condition."

"Oh, you can! That's the way fellows that are afraid always talk, but they never come up to the scratch. You are a coward."

"That's a lie," said Dick.

"What!" cried Harper, growing red in the face.

"I said you lie," repeated Dick.

As Dick said this, the two boys were standing close together, and Harper struck out as quick as thought.

But Dick had been looking for something like this, and jumping back, he avoided the greater force of the blow, which, if it had struck him fairly, must have knocked him off his feet.

"Shame!" cried several of the boys.

Dick recovered himself quickly, and, before Harper could recover his guard, hit him a fair one on the forehead.

In his customary state of strength, a blow as fair between the eyes as this would have knocked an antagonist off his legs, but in Dick's present weak condition it produced no effect on Harper beyond staggering him slightly.

"You're played out," said Harper; "now I'll pound you to a jelly."

He squared himself, put himself in position and rushed at Dick, who prepared to defend himself as best he could.

"Shame—shame!" rose from the boys. Harper stopped and glared at them fiercely.

"Who said that?" he asked. "Let me find out and I'll polish him off, after I've had it out with this game-cock."

"You'll not have it out with him to-day," said Granby, as he stepped forward, accompanied by several of the larger boys.

Harper saw that the popular feeling was against him.

"I suppose it will keep," said he.

"It will have to," said Granby. "We're not going to see you knock the life out of Halladay in his present weak condition. Look at the black mark around his neck now, where Dilks' fingers went. He isn't strong enough to fight a baby. His wind is not good enough now. He'd faint before he'd be at it two minutes."

"It's my opinion he's shamming to get rid of it," said Harper. "He didn't like what he got before."

"He gave you about as good as he got," said Granby, "and I don't know but a little better."

"I'll be all right to-morrow," said Dick. "I'll show him then what I can do."

"Will you?" sneered Harper. "I only hope you'll keep your word, and not sneak around and keep out of my reach, that's all."



"No danger," said Dick. "You'll find me, and you'll be glad enough to get rid of me, too."

"Well, you can't have it out now," said Granby. "Halladay is in no condition to fight. Come, Dick, let's go for a stroll."

They walked around the grounds until it was nearly dinner time, and then went to look at the stables, so as to be near the house when the bell rang, for Dick had a pious regard for his stomach.

"Old Scragg has a collection of plants and fossils in the wagon house chamber," said Granby. "What do you say if we go up and take a look at them?"

"I don't mind."

"We'll have to be pretty sly, though, for if Scragg catches us he'll have us caned, besides sending us to the bottom of the class."

"That's all right," said Dick. "I don't mean that he shall capture us. I wonder if he's got the ink rubbed off his face yet?"

"Or his trousers mended. Oh, my! when the flag of truce appeared I thought I should burst."

"He'll be even with me for that yet," said Dick.

"How can he, when he doesn't know who did it?"

"He'll find out some way. These things don't keep, they always get out somehow."

"Well, this won't. Only we two know of it, and I'm sure neither of us will tell."

"I'm not so sure of that."

"You don't suspect me, I hope," said Granby, in a hurt, grieved tone.

"Not a bit, old fellow," said Dick, quickly. "You wouldn't tell on me even to shield yourself. Come, let's go up and have a peep at old Scragg's fossils."

He stepped out, but Granby caught his arm and jerked him back suddenly.

"There's old Scragg himself," he whispered. "Keep close. Get behind this column."

They stowed themselves away, as only boys can do, out of sight.

Peering around the column, they saw Mr. Scragg take a short ladder from the side of the barn, and place it by the wagon house, so that its end reached to the upper door.

Then he ascended, entered the place and disappeared.

"His face his clean," whispered Granby.

"Yes," said Dick, laughing. "And he has changed his unmentionables."

"Did you notice the downcast look he had?"

"Yes, as if he were going to his own funeral."

"And no chief mourner."

"And his widow were going to marry her first love. I say, Granby."

"What is it?"

"Is there any way of getting down from here except by the ladder?"

"No."

"It would be a joke to remove it and keep Scragg there."

"Good! Let's do it."

"We must hurry. Scragg will be coming down now to prepare for dinner."

They went out silently and were at the foot of the ladder when Dick espied a large tub, the sides of which were smeared with some greasy liquid.

It was not exactly a tub, but a hogshead had been cut down about one-third from the top and an iron hoop put on.

"Granby," said Dick, "what's in the barrel?"

"Cook calls it swill," said Granby. "It's all the grease and offal that collects in the kitchen, mixed with greasy water that she washes the dishes in. It's a nasty mess, I can tell you."

"Help me bring it here," whispered Dick, letting go of the ladder.

"What for?"

"I'll show you. You'll see some fun in a minute if you do as I tell you."

"All right."

"Come on, then."

They rolled the hogshead on its edge by inverting it a little, yet not sufficiently to spill the mixture, which emitted an unsavory aroma, until it rested by the wagon house, underneath the door and behind the ladder.

"My! how it smells," said Granby, holding his nose.

"Awful!" said Dick, imitating his example. "Now stand close to the wall and be ready to pull down the ladder when I give the word."

They flattened themselves against the side of the building and waited.

Presently Mr. Scragg came to the door, and, without looking down, commenced descending the ladder backward.

"Now, Granby," whispered Dick, grasping one side of the ladder, "pull."

Granby pulled with a will.

Down came the ladder with a crash.

As it fell, Mr. Scragg threw out his hands with a yell and caught the door sill.

Dick and Granby retreated under the shed.

Mr. Scragg, hanging like grim death with both hands, commenced to kick and yell.

"Murder!" cried he, "I shall be dashed to pieces! Some one help me! Help! To the rescue!"

At this, Dick, anxious to be a little nearer, stepped out from under the shed, as if he had been attracted by Mr. Scragg's cries.



"What's the matter, Scragg?" he asked, coolly.

"Matter!" cried Mr. Scragg, struggling desperately. "Idiot! Don't you see? I am suspended here, 'mid heaven and earth, and shall be dashed in pieces on the rock-bound coast."

"Draw it mild, Mr. Scragg," said Dick, "there's no coast here, and I don't see a single rock."

"Lunatic! idiot!" yelled Mr. Scragg, struggling with all his strength to climb back into the doorway.

"Elevate your knees, and hoist your feet above your head, and curve your neck, and invert your elbows, and give a long pull altogether and you will suddenly discover that a sufficient altitude has been attained to enable you to plant your understandings on the door sill," repeated Dick.

Mr. Scragg ceased struggling and contrived to twist his head far enough over his shoulder to see who was addressing him.

"Is that you, Halladay?" he asked, piteously.

"Nobody else," said Dick.

"Assist me, Richard! assist me in this grievous strait to which the falling of the accursed ladder hath reduced me."

"Reduced you!" said Dick. "It seems to me you're elevated, instead of reduced."

"Verily, I am elevated," panted Mr. Scragg. "From the Latin *limbus*; and meaneth a place of restraint. Verily, I am in limbo. Release me, Richard, from the ragged edge——"

"Of a door sill. It can't be done, Mr. Scragg, I've just been choked to death, and haven't strength enough to lift a small-sized kitten, let alone a ladder. Hold on tight. I'll go for some one who'll take you down."

Dick retreated a little distance, and stood perfectly quiet.

Mr. Scragg hung suspended by his hands, without a motion, for he knew that struggles would exhaust him all the more quickly.

Yet he did not neglect to groan, and now uttered anathemas and said prayers alternately as interludes.

Presently his fingers slipped little by little toward the edge.

He felt himself going, and made a last effort to draw himself up.

This was more than his overstrained sinews could bear, and they relaxed suddenly.

With a howl of despair the head master fell.

He struck in the very center of the tub, and, his knees giving way under him, he was entirely submerged.

He rose again, reeking with the filthy stuff, his nose and mouth full, and his face covered.

Scragg climbed out at last and ran for Dick.

Dick retreated, and, being more agile than the head master, kept out of his reach.

"You villain!" cried Mr. Scragg at last. "You did that."

"Did what?" asked Dick, innocently. "Fell into the swill barrel? Oh, no, Mr. Scragg, I didn't; you did. Oh, my! how you smell! Don't come any closer to me, if you please."

He held his fingers to his nose and retreated.

"Oh, you'll suffer for this!" cried Mr. Scragg, furiously.

"Please keep your distance, Mr. Scragg," said Dick. "You really are very offensive. I am very sensitive to the bad effects of swill. It affects me very seriously."

"Oh, you outrageous heathen!" cried Mr. Scragg, dancing up and down.

"Mr. Scragg, I really must leave you. The aroma which emanates from you does not at all resemble attar of roses. I advise you to take a bath, sir. I've been choked almost to death to-day, Mr. Scragg, and my organs of respiration aren't in excellent order yet. I'll suffocate if I stay. You must excuse me, sir."

As Dick concluded, he ran away under the shed, where Granby lay with his handkerchief stuffed in his mouth, almost bursting with suppressed laughter.

"Oh, won't you catch it!" said Granby, as soon as he could speak.

"I've had my money's worth, anyhow," said Dick. "Come, let's go to dinner. The bell rang five minutes ago, and I'm hungry as a bear."

They went into the dining hall and ate heartily, calm outwardly, although both were quaking in their shoes in expectation of what was coming.

## CHAPTER VII.

### DICK IS "HORSED."

After dinner the boys went to the schoolroom.

Presently the principal and Mr. Scragg, followed by the under teachers, entered.

Mr. Scragg presented a very sleek and glossy appearance, owing, no doubt, to the vigorous scrubbing which he had hired Bolles, the coachman, to give him.

He presented a much better appearance than when Dick last saw him, as he emerged from the tub.

"Boys," said Mr. Landon, "to-day there have been offenses, grave and outrageous, committed against Mr. Scragg, the respected head master, and against the dignity of Strykerville Academy."

"And against the dignity of Elihu Scragg, head master," said Mr. Scragg, solemnly.

"Very true," said Mr. Landon, with severity. "And since these indignities have been committed against Mr.



Scragg, the honored and respected head master of this academy, and second in authority to me, I have deputed him to act in this matter with full power to use all means at his command to discover and punish the perpetrator of this vile outrage which has been committed against him."

Mr. Landon sat down, and Mr. Scragg arose and faced the school.

"Boys," said he, "to-day the vilest outrages and most heinous crimes in the history of Strykerville Academy have been committed. I, Elihu Scragg, have been most shamefully abused; I have been scorched with powder, I have been stuck fast to my chair, and an inkstand has been emptied of its contents on my head. I have also been submerged in a filthy mass of liquid substances prepared for swine, called in the Latin, *Swilgaru*, which meaneth to swallow. Verily, I swallowed a large quantity of the filthy stuff which vulgar people have named swill, and my stomach it rebelleth exceedingly, and has become grievously sore."

Mr. Scragg pressed both hands in the pit of his stomach and groaned dolefully.

Mr. Bolton's face worked convulsively, as if he wanted to laugh, but did not dare.

Dick and Granby sat as if nailed to their seats, not a muscle of their faces moving.

"I have my mind on the perpetrator of the last outrage," continued Mr. Scragg, having again obtained control over his stomach. "And I can place my hand on him at any moment. Presently I shall do so, and shall so punish him that he will hereafter play no more practical jokes upon me. I shall pay attention now to the first offense, and I call upon the boy who stuck me to my chair and smeared my face with ink to come forward and confess."

Of course no one arose and came forward.

"I did not expect the offender would come forward and acknowledge his guilt," continued Mr. Scragg, "and I shall proceed to cane the whole school, one by one. By that means I shall surely punish the real offender. Sutton, you are the nearest, and your turn will come first."

"I've done nothing, sir," said Sutton, who was a little fellow, and quite delicate.

He began to whimper.

"Look here, Granby," whispered Dick. "I can't stand this. I can't sit here and see that little fellow flogged."

"What are you going to do about it?" asked Granby.

"I shall own up," said Dick.

"And get caned within an inch of your life."

"I can't help that. I am sure to be caned on account of the swill, and it may as well all come at once."

"I'll have to take half of the swill pounding," said Granby.

"No, you'll not; you keep quiet. Scragg doesn't know you had anything to do with it."

"But I'm not going to let you take all the pounding when I'm to blame as much as you are."

"No, you're not. I got you into it. Besides, it will not make my pounding any too easy if you get thrashed, too. You keep quiet, Granby."

While they whispered together Mr. Scragg had gone up to Sutton, who would not come out on the floor.

"Come out," said Mr. Scragg.

"I don't want to be licked when I haven't done anything," whimpered Sutton.

Mr. Scragg grasped him by the collar and drew him out on the floor.

He raised the cane.

Dick stood up in his seat.

"Hold on, Mr. Scragg," said he.

Mr. Scragg looked that way.

"Oh, it's you, is it!" he said. "You'd better sit down. Your turn will come soon enough."

"But I have something to say, Mr. Scragg," said Dick. "Sutton doesn't deserve to be whipped. I put the torpedoes under the desk lid."

"Oh, you did!"

"Yes, sir."

"Perhaps you put the sticking plaster on the chair."

"I did, sir."

"And placed the inkstand so that it would drench me."

"I did that, too, sir," said Dick, who could not restrain a grin as he thought of the ridiculous figure Mr. Scragg made, with the ink running down over his face and dripping from his nose.

"And you're laughing at it now!" cried Mr. Scragg. "Verily the spirit of levity is uppermost in your nature. It must be lowered."

"Certainly, sir," said Dick. "You were lowered considerably, and it's no more than right that I should be."

"I lowered! I, Elihu Scragg, head master, lowered?"

"Of course you were, sir."

"Verily," said Mr. Scragg, employing his favorite expression, "this passeth understanding."

"You were lowered into a swill tub, lower than I shall ever be, I hope. That's on a level with swine, Mr. Scragg."

"Cluck, cluck!" came from Mr. Bolton's direction.

Mr. Scragg turned around fiercely.

"Did you laugh, Mr. Bolton?" he asked.

"I! no, sir," said Mr. Bolton, who was very red in the face. "Not I."

"I thought you did," said Mr. Scragg.

"Haladay, come forward."

Dick approached.



"Higginson," said Mr. Scragg, "come and horse Halladay."

"I'd rather not, sir," said Higginson, who was head boy in the school.

"You refuse?"

"I must, sir, respectfully."

"Very good; we will attend to your case presently. Is there any large boy in the school who will volunteer to horse Halladay?"

"I will, sir," said Harper.

Several hisses were heard.

"Silence!" thundered Mr. Scragg. "Come forward, Harper."

Harper came up, well pleased to do anything he could against Dick.

"Get up on that bench, Halladay," commanded Mr. Scragg.

Dick stepped up on the bench, and was compelled to put his arms around Harper's neck.

Harper seized his hands and held them firmly, while Mr. Scragg proceeded to administer chastisement.

Dick never moved nor uttered a cry, and Mr. Scragg did not pause until he was so utterly exhausted that he could not strike another blow.

"There," he panted, as he sank back, breathless, on a seat. "That will teach you not to experiment with torpedoes and tar, and ink, and swill, on me again. Unloose him, Harper."

Harper let him down, and, very sore and stiff, but plucky as ever, he went back to his seat.

"The punishment was well merited," said Mr. Landon, now coming forward. "It will serve as a warning in the future. Boys, attend to your studies."

Every head was bent low over a book, and the exercises went on as if nothing uncommon had happened.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HARPER FALLS INTO A TRAP.

"Goodness! how Scragg laid it on," whispered Granby, when all was quiet.

Dick laid his head down on the desk, and was shivering.

"I ought to have walked up, like a man, and got my share," continued Granby.

"You did just right," said Dick. "How would it have helped the matter if you had got pounded as well as me?"

"I don't know," said Granby. "But I shouldn't have felt so much like a sneak, that's all."

"No; but you would have felt a great deal worse. My! how my back smarts!"

"Harper ought to have been ashamed of himself to

hold you," he said. "There is not another boy in the school who would have done it."

"I'll get even with him yet."

"How?"

"I don't know. I'll find a way, though."

"I wouldn't fight him."

"Wouldn't you? Well, I will, then."

"He's too big for you, Dick."

"Is he? That remains to be seen. I didn't come out of it so badly yesterday."

"I know. But he'll tire you out in the long run."

"No whispering there, Granby," said Mr. Scragg, from his desk.

Granby subsided, and remained quiet until school was out and they were upon the playground.

No one said anything to Dick about his chastisement, for it was a point of honor among the boys never to refer to any affair of that kind after it had happened; at least not to the victim, no matter how much they might talk about it among themselves, beyond the hearing of the one to whom the stick had been applied.

Harper was among a group of boys, and was proclaiming loudly his powers and endurance as a runner, and challenging all to a trial of speed.

No one seemed inclined to take him up, however.

As Dick passed, Harper eyed him suspiciously, but did not speak.

He rubbed his back, however, significantly.

Dick and Granby went to the grove.

Before they had been there long a shower came up so suddenly that they had not time to reach the house before getting a thorough wetting, and they remained under a tree for shelter.

Presently it cleared away, and Dick observed a pool of rain water standing where there had been a depression in the ground.

"Granby, where do they run foot races?" he asked.

"Right here," said Granby.

"I've half a mind to have a try with Harper."

"I wouldn't."

"Why not?"

"Because you are sore and stiff from the caning you got, and he'll beat you."

"I don't mind that," said Dick.

"You don't?"

"No. Just watch me, and you'll see some fun, if Harper will run."

Dick took a piece of stout twine from his pocket, and tied an end to a tree by a path.

Then he stretched the string across the path about six inches from the ground, and fastened the end to another tree.

"What are you about?" asked Granby, mystified.



"You'll see," said Dick, chuckling, as he went to the water and stirred it up with a stick until it became very thick and muddy.

"Now come on," said he. "We'll go and find Harper. You challenge him for me! I don't want to speak to the beast."

"All right," said Granby, beginning to understand.

The boys had come out of the building, after the shower, and were standing near the place where Dick and Granby had left them. Harper was still bragging about his speed.

"Do you want to run?" asked Granby, going up to him; "because if you do you can be accommodated."

"Who's the man?"

"Halladay."

"All right."

Both boys removed coat, vest and hat, and stood ready.

"Let's you and I go up to the coming-out place," said Granby to Higginson; "there will be need of somebody there to decide."

"Come along," said Higginson.

Granby led the way along the edge of the grove, being careful to avoid Dick's rope.

They stationed themselves at the end of the course.

Presently a shout from the boys announced that Dick and Harper had started.

At first both kept side by side; then Dick purposely allowed Harper to lead him.

As they neared the hole, Harper looked over his shoulder and said, tauntingly:

"Is that your best? I might as well run a race with a mud turtle as you."

"You'll be a mud turtle pretty soon, or I'm mistaken," said Dick, under his breath.

Just then Harper struck the rope and went head first into the mud.

Dick, pretending to stumble, cut the rope with his knife, and threw the ends into the woods before the boys came up.

In a moment Harper emerged from the puddle, blowing dirty water from his mouth.

His face was as black as ink.

The boys uttered a howl of derision.

Harper emerged from the mud puddle shaking his fist at Dick, who had leaned back against a tree and was laughing loudly.

"You did that!" cried Harper, foaming.

"How could I?" asked Dick, innocently. "I was ten feet behind you when you fell."

"I don't care," said Harper. "You set a trap for me, and I'm going to lick you for it."

"If you can," said Dick, coolly.

"Just give me the chance," cried Harper, angered beyond endurance.

"All right," said Dick. "Only I don't much like to fight with you, you're so dirty. Would it be too much trouble to scrape a little of the mud off your countenance first?"

"Never mind the mud," roared Harper. "Come on, if you mean fight."

"Form a ring!" cried Higginson, who had come up.

A ring was formed, and the two principals entered, Granby backing Dick, and Higginson acting as Harper's second.

## CHAPTER IX.

### A HARD-FOUGHT BATTLE.

"Halladay, you're not in condition to fight," said Granby, when they stood in the ring.

"I know it," said Dick.

"Why do you do it, then? Why not wait a day or two until you are yourself again?"

"Because Harper would say I am afraid of him. Besides, I owe him satisfaction for playing this trick on him."

"Is your man ready, Granby?" asked Higginson, from his corner.

"Yes."

"Let's begin, then."

"All right," said Granby.

Then, whispering to Dick, he continued:

"Force the fighting. Harper is slow, and if you are quick enough, you are all right. It's the only way to do it."

Dick nodded, and advanced to the center of the ring, where Harper already was.

Harper was smiling and confident.

He knew that Dick was not in his usual condition, and that he was stiff and sore, and he expected an easy victory.

Dick was cool but cautious.

He approached Harper warily.

Harper struck the first blow.

It was a heavy one with his right, and intended to take Dick between the eyes.

If it had struck the spot at which it was aimed, Dick would have gone down.

Dick dodged aside, however, nimble as a monkey, and the blow missed him.

Before Harper could recover his balance, Dick seized the opportunity and gave it to him, first with his left, followed quickly with the right, cutting his lip, and making the blood flow freely.

Then they closed in, and blows were exchanged quite freely.

They were of little consequence, however, neither being much hurt.



Suddenly Dick sprang off a step and struck out hard, hoping to take Harper off his guard.

Harper was watching for some such thing, however, and avoided it.

Before Dick could recover his balance he received a left, right straight from the shoulder.

He went down like a bullock.

Granby called "time."

This was the conclusion of the first round, and Dick got the worst of it.

Harper's stock went up.

Dick's fell correspondingly.

No one now had any doubt as to how the fight was going.

Harper was certain to win.

Granby lifted Dick and carried him to his corner.

"Wake up!" he said, slapping him on the back.

Dick opened his eyes.

His head was spinning round like a top, and his ideas were confused.

"Where am I?" he asked. "What has happened?"

"Come, come," said Granby, impatiently. "Don't you remember?"

"Oh, I know," said Dick, as he looked around and saw Harper and Higginson on the other side of the ring.

"Are you going to cave?" asked Granby.

"Cave!" exclaimed Dick, who was fast becoming all right. "Not much. I'm all right, and I'll lick him yet."

"That's the talk," said Granby.

"Has your man had enough of it?" asked Higginson, coming over.

"No," said Granby. "There's lots of fight in him yet. He's all right."

"He don't look like it."

"You'll see in the next round. He'll lick your man yet."

"Take a fiver that he don't get knocked out of time next round?"

"Yes."

"All right."

"It's a bet."

"Yes. Come, parade your man, or throw up the sponge."

"We're all ready."

"And anxious," said Dick, who had fully recovered.

"Be careful," said Granby. "Don't let him surprise you this time. You are spryer than he, and ought to be able to keep out of his way. Another knockdown like that will fix you."

"That's all right," said Dick, confidently. "He won't do it again; you'll see."

"That's right; keep up your courage. Go in now, Harper's waiting."

Harper stood in the center of the ring, standing carelessly with his hands by his sides, and as Dick advanced cautiously he tried the same game which sent Dick to grass before.

That is, he sprang forward suddenly and struck out with both hands, as before, hoping to take Dick off his guard.

Dick, on the watch for this dodge, stooped, and Harper's fist passed over his head.

Then, being under Harper's guard, he struck upward with all the force he could throw into the blow.

Both fists, first the left, then the right, struck Harper under the chin, lifting him bodily off the ground and knocking him off his legs like a chip.

He fell heavily.

Higginson carried him to his corner.

Dick retired to his.

"I told you I'd fix him," he said. "I knew he'd try that same game again, and it's the easiest thing in the world to beat it when you know what's going to be done."

"You'll be too much for him yet, if you can stick," said Granby. "His game will be to tire you out. He can take a great deal of pounding."

"He'll get enough of it this round, or I'm mistaken. I'm going to get him into chancery."

"Good. If you can do that you'll knock him out of time."

"I'll fix him. See if they're ready."

"Is your man ready yet?" Granby called to Higginson.

"Yes."

"Send him out then; we're tired of waiting."

Harper advanced to the center, showing signs of punishment.

His tongue was cut and swollen, and his mouth was bleeding.

He had evidently come to the conclusion that he had a more formidable antagonist to deal with than he had imagined, and resolved to be more wary.

He advanced cautiously.

Dick did the same.

A few blows of no consequence were exchanged, and then both stood looking at each other, watching an opening.

Suddenly Dick sprang forward and feinted with his right at Harper's face.

Harper threw up his hands to ward off the blow, and Dick, quick as a flash, shot the left into his stomach, doubling him up like a ball.

Before he could recover, Dick threw his left arm around his neck, drawing his head down, and with his right commenced striking upward blows on Harper's face.

Every blow told.

Harper struggled to break away, but it was of no use.

"Drop!" cried Higginson; "drop, you fool, or he'll kill you!"

Granby clapped his hands and jumped up and down.

"Hold him, Dick!" he cried. "You've got him. Give it to him!"

"Down, Harper! Drop, I tell you!" cried Higginson. "Fall under!"

Harper did drop, and Higginson dragged him to his corner.

Granby grasped Dick's hand.

"You'll do it!" he exclaimed. "I don't believe he'll come up again."

"I don't know about that," said Dick. "He'll stand an immense amount of pounding."

"Has your man got enough of it, Higginson?" asked Granby.

"No. He'll be out in a minute."

"Hurry him out or throw up the sponge. We can't wait an hour."



At this Harper got on his feet and advanced once more. But he did not look as if there was much fight left in him.

One of his eyes was entirely closed and the other nearly so, and he was shaky on his legs.

Dick played around him as he chose.

Every blow told.

At last Harper went down like a log and lay still.

"Is your man licked?" asked Granby.

"Yes," replied Higginson.

"Hurrah!" shouted Granby.

The boys crowded around to shake hands with the victor, and congratulate him.

## CHAPTER X.

### LOBSTERS AND GHOSTS.

Dick had gained a very popular victory.

None of the boys liked Harper.

He had been the bully of the school and had tyrannized over them.

He had thrashed so many of them, upon slight provocation, that they had come to the conclusion he was invincible, and they had better accede to his demands and submit to his insults.

Now it had been shown that he could be whipped, and by a smaller boy than himself, who had pluck.

The stock in a fallen hero goes down rapidly.

Harper's reign was over, for either one of a dozen of the larger boys would now have been willing to try their muscle with him, and only wondered why it was that they had been so cowardly and afraid before.

Dick and Granby sauntered slowly back to the house.

On a bench by the side of the house sat Monsieur Louvre, the French teacher.

He looked up from his book as they passed, and smiled and nodded.

Both boys took off their hats in return, and bowed.

At the rear door of the part occupied by the principal and his family there was a large covered basket. Dick eyed it curiously.

"I wonder what's in the basket, Granby?" he asked.

"Don't know," said Granby. "Let's find out."

"Agreed."

They went up to the basket and raised the corner and looked in.

It was filled with lobsters.

"Granby," said Dick, "there's a chance for some fun."

"How?"

"Keep your eyes open and you'll see."

Dick stooped down, and, seizing one of the lobsters carefully, removed it from the basket and closed the lid.

Then he walked back to the schoolroom, and through it to the window near which, on the outside of the building, Monsieur Louvre was sitting, calmly perusing *Le Juif Errant* and musing on the miseries and depravities of society therein presented.

Reaching through the window, which was open, Dick dexterously deposited his burden on the French teacher's back.

Then he and Granby retreated a few feet from the window to a position from which they could see and not be seen, and watched.

As soon as the lobster—which was perfectly active—found a resting place, its first movement naturally was to grasp something with its claws, like a crab.

That "something" happened to be Monsieur Louvre's ear, which was his most prominent feature.

It seized his ear and shut down hard.

Monsieur yelled and sprang up.

The lobster thumped like lead against his back.

Monsieur, with his eyes starting nearly out of his head, with fright, threw up his hand to seize the bold intruder.

As his hand came in contact with its disengaged claw, the lobster shut down on his index finger with a snap.

"*Sacre-e-e-e!*" yelled monsieur, with a prolonged howl, struggling to release his finger.

The lobster bit all the harder and held it firmly.

Monsieur commenced to dance violently up and down.

"*Le diable!*" he yelled. "*Ou-u-u-f!*"

He commenced to call loudly for assistance, as he was really in pain.

"Granby," said Dick. "Let's go and take it off. It will eat him up."

He went out where the Frenchman was dancing.

"What's the matter, monsieur?" he asked, innocently.

"*Le diable!* Take him off!"

Dick, with a great deal of trouble, and the use of considerable force, removed the lobster and threw it on the ground.

Monsieur rubbed his ear, sucked his injured finger and viewed the object of his discomfiture.

"Ze lobster!" he exclaimed, in a tone of surprise.

"Yes, sir," said Dick. "He must have come from the pond."

The French master shook his head.

"Lobstares do not grow in ze fresh water," said he. "He came from ze schoolroom."

He eyed Dick suspiciously, rubbing his injured ear meanwhile.

Dick had nothing to say.

In imagination he saw the cane looming up, in the man's features, and could almost feel it on his back.

"How did he get in ze schoolroom?" continued monsieur.

"Escaped from the kitchen, maybe, sir," said Dick.

"Can't tell, sir, unless he climbed up the wall," said Granby.

"Lobstares do not climb perpendiculars. Some one put him through ze window."

"How can that be, sir," asked Dick, "when I was in the schoolroom and would have seen any one who dared to do such a trick?"

The Frenchman grinned.

"Dick Halladay," said he, "I think you shall receive a caning in ze morning."

Monsieur Louvre walked off, holding his injured ear, and Dick was left to reflect on his chances of a caning in the morning.

"You're in for it," called Granby, through the window.

Granby had kept carefully hidden out of Monsieur Louvre's sight until that gentleman retreated.

Now he came out to Dick.

"Well, suppose I am," said Dick; "who cares?"

"I don't believe you care much," said Granby.

"What's the use?"



"None. Only a flogging hurts."

"That's so. But a fellow can get used to it after a while, I suppose."

"I don't know about that," said Granby, shrugging his shoulders.

"Well, don't fret," said Dick. "It isn't you that's going to get it."

"No. I'm out of it."

"What shall we do next?"

"I don't know."

"I don't know much about the house yet," said Dick. "Suppose you show me around a little before supper."

"All right."

They went through all the unoccupied rooms on the second and third floors.

"Where does that lead to?" asked Dick, pointing to a ladder at the end of a long hall.

"To the garret," said Granby.

"Ever been up?"

"No."

"Let's go."

"I don't believe Mr. Landon will allow us to go up there."

"What's the odds? He'll never find it out. Come on."

Dick went up the ladder, and Granby very reluctantly followed.

There was not much to see when they were up.

The garret was used as a place of storage, and all the old traps that had accumulated in years were stored away there along the sides of the long room, under the eaves of the building.

As they were coming away, Dick observed a hole in the floor.

Dick went down on his hands and knees and looked through.

"Whose room is this underneath, Granby?" asked Dick.

"Old Scragg's, I think," said Granby. "Let me take a look."

He got down on his knees and applied his eye to the hole.

"It's Scragg's," he announced, after an examination. "I see his Sunday wig on the table—I say, Dick, we could give him an awful scare!"

"How?"

"Scragg is a spiritualist, and he is always trying to get the ghosts to come and talk with him, as the mediums say they do to them."

"Well, what of it?"

"If we should come up here to-night, Scragg will, just as like as not, be trying to summon them. If we place our lips close to the floor and speak through the knothole, he'll never know where the voice comes from, and he will take it for a genuine spirit. Scragg is always blowing that he wouldn't be afraid of a ghost if it should appear to him in the dead of night. I want to put his courage to the test."

"Good," said Dick. "That's high. You are a genius. What time will the show commence?"

"Not before eleven o'clock. We'll have to leave the dormitory after all the boys are asleep."

"Won't Scragg be asleep, too?"

"If he is we'll wake him up. I don't think he'll be asleep, though. He doesn't go to bed till late."

"We want to wait until he's in bed, don't we?" asked Dick.

"Yes. He won't be so brave in the dark as he is when the lamp is burning."

"That's so. There goes the bell. Let's go down to supper."

At supper Monsieur Louvre said nothing about the lobster, and Dick hoped that he would forget to cane him for it in the morning.

"Halladay," said Higginson, calling him aside after supper, "who put the lobster on Monsieur Louvre's back?"

"How should I know?" asked Dick, innocently, wondering all the time how Higginson had managed to find it out.

"Oh, you needn't make strange of it," said Higginson. "I know you did it."

"How do you know?" asked Dick, cautiously.

"I heard Kelly say so."

"You did?"

"Yes. I heard him tell Monsieur Louvre just before supper that you did it—you and Granby."

"Where was Kelly?"

"Looking in through a window on the other side of the schoolroom."

"What kind of a boy is Kelly?"

"Oh, he's mean. He's a contemptible sneak. He would do anything to get in with the masters. If you want a thing kept quiet, never let Kelly know anything about it."

"Kelly will get licked," said Dick, going over to Granby.

He was much annoyed, for the French master was now certain who was responsible for his injured ear and finger.

Besides, Granby was implicated by the little mischief-maker, and would be certain to receive his share of the punishment.

At eleven o'clock that night Dick got up and went to Granby's bed and nudged him.

"Time, Granby," he whispered.

"All right."

Dick went to his trunk, opened it softly and took out a piece of stout twine, which he doubled and twisted, making it very strong.

Then he went to Kelly's bed, removed the lobster and carried it downstairs, unbolted the door and threw it in the back yard.

After that he went back and joined Granby, whom he found waiting for him opposite Mr. Scragg's door.

"Fasten Scragg's door so he can't get out," said Dick.

He tied the cord to the knob of Mr. Scragg's door and fastened the other end to the door opposite, which happened to be Monsieur Louvre's.

"Now we're ready," he whispered.

They went along the hall to the ladder and ascended to the attic.

A light shone through the knothole.

Mr. Scragg was not yet in bed.

Granby peered through.

"He's sitting in his nightshirt, smoking," he announced.

"He'll blow out the light in a minute. The pipe's almost out."



A moment later the light was no longer seen.

"He's in bed," whispered Granby. "You must come to the knothole, Dick, and do the talking. Your voice is deeper than mine. Make it as sepulchral as you can. We'll see if old Scragg is as brave as he makes believe."

Dick took Granby's place, and, lying down flat on his stomach, placed his lips close to the hole and said, in a hollow voice:

"Elihu!"

## CHAPTER XI.

### MR. SCRAGG IS BAPTIZED.

Dick's voice through the knothole sounded as sepulchral as though he had been dead and buried a year, and it was issuing from a tomb.

It did not appear to emanate from any particular place, but seemed to be all over the room.

Dick and Granby listened.

Mr. Scragg did not speak, but there was a suspicious creaking of the bed.

"Give it to him again," whispered Granby.

"Elihu!" groaned Dick, in his most dismal accents.

"Oh, Lord!" groaned Mr. Scragg, from the bed.

"That's your sort," whispered Granby. "You're rousing him up. Put as much brimstone in your tone as possible. Fire away."

"Elihu Scragg!"

"Good Lord!" exclaimed Mr. Scragg.

"Elihu! awake!"

"My Lord! I am!"

"I am thy father's spirit!" wailed Dick.

"Saints preserve me!" groaned Scragg. "Am I a second Hamlet? Hamlet saw his father's spirit and died soon after. I hear my father's spirit and I shall die. Oh, please, Mr. Spirit, go away."

"Elihu," said Dick, through the knothole, "thou hast often appealed to the spirits of the air to come."

"Holy mother preserve us!" cried Mr. Scragg. "I did not expect they would appear to me in the middle of the night, with the light out."

"We who come from the shrine of Pluto shun the light and love the darkness."

Mr. Scragg covered his head with the bedclothes, and groaned loudly.

"Elihu," continued Dick, "hast thou ever been baptized?"

"No, good Mr. Spirit, but I will be. I will even be baptized to-morrow—immersed, dowsed, anything, if you'll only go away."

"I will baptize thee, Elihu."

"Oh, please, good Mr. Ghost," ejaculated Mr. Scragg, "don't do it. Oh, please don't. I cannot stand it. I had hydrophobia when I was young, and the sight of water ever since would throw me into convulsions."

"I shall baptize thee with blood, Elihu."

"Oh, Heaven!"

"With warm, bright blood, taken from the heart of Pluto."

"Oh, holy——"

"Uncover thy head, Elihu! Uncover it, I command, that thou may'st receive this saving ordinance."

"Oh, please, good Mr.——"

"Uncover, Elihu! Bring not down upon thee Pluto's wrath."

"Oh, saints and patriarchs!"

"Uncover!"

"Oh, Moses and Elijah!"

"Take off the covering!"

"Oh, shades of Paul and Timothy, defend me!"

"Once more, Elihu, beware how you disobey the command of the dead Pluto."

"Oh-h-h-h!"

"Is it done, Elihu?"

"Ye-e-es!"

"Do not move while I prepare to administer the sacred rite."

Dick turned away from the knothole and commenced fumbling in his pocket.

"You've got yourself in a nice fix now," whispered Granby. "You've told old Scragg you are going to baptize him, and you can't do it."

"Can't I? Wait and see."

"I don't see how."

"Feel of this."

Dick produced a long and slender instrument.

"What is it?"

"A syringe, already loaded."

"With what?"

"Water."

"Clean?"

"No. Dirty as mud."

Granby chuckled rather loudly.

"Be quiet," admonished Dick. "He'll hear you, and that will spoil all the fun."

Granby crammed both fists against his mouth.

"I'll have to guess at the direction," said Dick. "I wonder if I'll shoot straight?"

"My! How he'll squirm!" chuckled Granby.

"Like a bobbed eel," replied Dick.

Mr. Scragg's groans continued without interruption.

"Elihu," said Dick, applying his mouth to the knothole.

"Yes, Mr. Ghost. Oh! Sts. Peter and Paul, take it away!" groaned Mr. Scragg.

"Are you ready to receive the saving ordinance?"

"Please, Mr. Spirit, can't you wait till daylight?"

"No. The fates have decreed that it must be administered at this hour. Is your head uncovered, Elihu?"

"Yes, Mr. Ghost. Oh, Lord, I shall collapse!"

"And go up in a balloon," chuckled Granby.

"Shut up!" said Dick.

Mr. Scragg continued groaning and calling upon all the saints in the calendar, and saying his prayers between time.

"Elihu!" called Dick.

"Wh-a-a-at!" answered Mr. Scragg.

"Are you prepared?"

"Ye-e-e-s."

"Is your head uncovered?"

"U-m-m-m!"

"Then I shall proceed to administer unto thee, oh, favored mortal, that which has been vouchsafed to no being in the flesh since Pluto stole Proserpina and carried her away to the infernal regions, where, sitting on his left, with the dog, Cerberus, and Parcae guarding them,



and the Harpies hovering around them, she reigneth with them still."

Mr. Scragg's teeth could plainly be heard chattering.

"Fire away, Dick," whispered Granby.

Dick pointed the syringe at the spot where he thought Mr. Scragg's head ought to be, according to the sound of his voice, and punched away at the piston.

"S-s-s-st!" went the water.

"Oo-o-o-ch!" yelled Mr. Scragg.

"You've hit him!" exclaimed Granby, who was dying with suppressed laughter. "Hold me, Dick, or I shall shake to pieces."

"Be still, you fool. Do you want Scragg to hear you?"

"Hear me? Oh, my goodness! He couldn't hear a cannon. Ha, ha! Ha-a!"

"Murder!" yelled Mr. Scragg. "I'm shot! straight through the head. By Pluto! By my father's spirit! Let me out!"

He jumped out of bed and ran for the door.

The cord which Dick had fastened to it held it tightly.

Mr. Scragg ran to the window.

It was closed.

He threw it up and commenced hallooing loud enough to wake the dead.

"Murder! Thieves! Ghosts!"

"Hobgoblins!" added Dick.

"Fire! Water! Blood!" cried Mr. Scragg, his voice rising with each word until it ended in a perfect howl.

Dick began to get frightened.

"He'll have the whole house up!" he exclaimed. "Let's hurry down and take the string from the door and get to bed."

They ran down the steps.

Dick caught his foot on the top of the ladder and pitched to the bottom.

Luckily he was not hurt.

He was up again in a minute and before Mr. Scragg's door.

Mr. Scragg was still at the window, calling loudly for assistance.

His frenzied cries echoed through and through the house.

Dick could hear footsteps approaching hurriedly.

Two slashes of his knife freed the rope, and they ran as fast as ever Tam o' Shanter rode for the dormitory.

Each jumped into his own bed, and in a second both were, to all appearances, fast asleep.

## CHAPTER XII.

### MONSIEUR LOUVRE MEETS WITH A MISFORTUNE.

Mr. Scragg redoubled his cries for help.

And Monsieur Louvre, having been aroused by the cries of Mr. Scragg, had tried the door and found it fast.

He then put his head out of the window and commenced shrieking murder, fire and thieves as loudly as had Mr. Scragg, across the hall.

Mr. Landon was the first to reach the room of the headmaster.

He opened the door quickly, and found Mr. Scragg with his head stuck out of the window, yelling loudly.

Rushing up to him, he grasped him by the collar and pulled him back into the room.

Mr. Scragg's face was very pale, and his short night-dress and the nightcap which was drawn over his head rendered his appearance ridiculous in the extreme.

"Baptism! Blood! Ghosts!" yelled Mr. Scragg.

"Eh!" exclaimed Mr. Landon.

"Pluto! Proserpina! Cerberus!"

Mr. Landon laid hold of his ear and twisted it.

Mr. Scragg howled.

"Have you gone crazy?" exclaimed the principal.

"Hamlet! My father's spirit!" yelled Mr. Scragg.

Mr. Landon, losing all patience, thumped his head against the back of the chair.

"You're drunk!" he exclaimed.

This imputation upon his sobriety at once aroused Mr. Scragg.

"Drunk!" he exclaimed. "I, Elihu Scragg, intoxicated? It is not so!"

"What is the matter, then?"

"I have seen spirits," said Mr. Scragg, solemnly.

"Nonsense!"

"Nonsense! No, sir. I believe I am a man whose veracity is unquestioned."

"Certainly!"

"Then I say that I have seen spirits. I, Elihu Scragg, headmaster of Strykerville Academy, have heard the spirit of my father, and he has spoken to me."

"Pshaw!"

"And I have been baptized in blood drawn from the heart of Pluto."

"Humbug!"

"No; it is no humbug. I have the proof."

"You have been dreaming."

"Dreaming! when the blood in which I was baptized is on my face!" exclaimed Mr. Scragg, becoming angry.

"I see no blood," said Mr. Landon. "There is no blood there. My advice to you, Mr. Scragg, is to go back to bed and sleep off the effects of your potatoes."

"No blood there!" cried Mr. Scragg, putting his hand to his face and feeling the dirty water which Dick had squirted from the syringe. "Then, sir, although you are my superior, if not in wisdom, I shall make bold to say that you do not know what blood is."

"I know its color, at least. All human blood that I have ever seen is red, and this resembles very dirty water."

Mr. Scragg passed his hand again over his face and looked at it.

His astonishment was intense.

He had expected the palm would be covered with blood. Instead he saw a very dirty liquid, which closely resembled water.

"This is singular," he said.

"Not at all, Mr. Scragg."

"I say it is!" exclaimed Mr. Scragg, forgetting the respect he owed his superior. "Verily, it is exceeding strange. Can it be that Pluto's blood is not red?"

"Mr. Scragg, you are a fool!" said Mr. Landon, becoming very angry, and forgetting politeness in his excitement.

"A fool!" cried Mr. Scragg, doubling up his fists and placing himself in a pugilistic attitude. "I, Elihu Scragg, fool! Verily you are my superior, Mr. Landon, yet, nevertheless, I am sorely tempted to punch your head!"



Mr. Landon, nothing loath, having been insulted and browbeaten by his inferior in position, squared himself.

The result would have been exceedingly doubtful, had not the door opened and Monsieur Louvre, having discovered that he could make his escape from his room, come in.

"What is all ze racket?" exclaimed monsieur. "Be gar, ze house has been lifted from ze foundation by Monsieur Scragg's what you call him—howl!"

"Mr. Scragg has received a severe shock," said Mr. Landon, with sarcasm.

"How?" asked Monsieur.

"Spirits!" said the principal. "He has seen the spirit of his father."

Monsieur executed a pirouette.

Then he paused and twirled his Louis Napoleon mustache and grinned.

"Monsieur, he take one little bit too much of ze wine—ze visky," said he. "He see ze snake and ze—what you call him hobgoblins. He have ze blue devils, ze delirium tremens."

Mr. Scragg yelled with fury.

"You miserable little frog-eating, pusillanimous, Waterloo Frenchman!" he cried. "Take that!"

He threw out his left fist very scientifically.

It hit monsieur in the left eye and made him see stars.

It was followed by his right, which caused monsieur to see more stars, and sent him rolling on the floor.

Then he proceeded to pound the Frenchman soundly, but Mr. Landon drew him off.

"For shame!" cried the principal. "Is it not enough to become drunk without beating my assistants?"

"Let him learn to keep his tongue between his teeth, then!" cried Mr. Scragg, again forgetting his rhetoric and using slang. "No frog-eating Frenchman shall accuse me of being subject to delirium tremens."

"Then you still persist in the absurd story of having been visited by your father's spirit?"

"Yes. And being baptized in Pluto's blood."

"Very dirty, muddy blood," said Mr. Landon.

"Well, may not Pluto's blood be muddy?" demanded Mr. Scragg. "Who will dare to say that the blood of the gods is red, like that of mortals?"

"Not I," said the principal. "Come, Mr. Scragg, let us see if any of Pluto's blood was deposited on the pillow, and if so, what color it is."

"A very good idea," said Mr. Scragg, who, since his chastisement of the Frenchman, had in a great measure subdued his excitement.

They examined the bed and found the pillow saturated with the dirty water which Dick had thrown.

"You see!" exclaimed Mr. Scragg, "that proves that I was not dreaming."

"It is very strange," murmured Mr. Landon.

"It's Pluto's blood," said Mr. Scragg.

"It's dirty water," said the principal.

"But where did it come from? You can see from the position it is thrown upon the headboard, that it descended diagonally."

"You are sure there was no one in the room, Mr. Scragg?"

"No mortal, sir. And the door was fastened, so that when I tried to escape I could not move it."

"Ah, you did not inform me of this before."

"No. In my excitement I neglected to."

"My door was fastened, too," said Monsieur Louvre, who was sitting in the middle of the floor, nursing his eyes, which were rapidly closing. "When I tried to go out I found that I was fastened in my room."

"Well, it is certain this substance is dirty water," said the principal, positively, "and that it was thrown by some one. Mr. Scragg, we will examine the ceiling. Be kind enough to hold the light."

Mr. Scragg, standing on a chair, held the lamp, while the principal, standing on a sofa, made an examination.

"There is a hole here," he said.

He placed his finger to it.

"And it is wet," he continued. "The water which struck you came through this place. There is no doubt of it."

He continued his examination.

"It is evidently a knothole," said he. "Let us go up into the attic and make an examination."

They descended from the chairs, and, leaving monsieur still sitting on the floor holding his eyes as if fearful they would start from his head and leave him, left the room and walked toward the ladder.

"One moment," said Mr. Landon, as they paused at the foot of the ladder.

"Well?" replied Mr. Scragg.

"It is evident that some one of the boys must have had a hand in this. Would it not be well for us to go into the dormitory and see if they are all there?"

"Yes."

"Let's go, then. Walk softly."

They went on tiptoe to the door of the dormitory and opened it silently.

All was quiet.

The dormitory was situated at the extreme rear of the house, while the teachers' apartments were in the front; consequently, the distance being so great, Mr. Scragg's cries had not reached them, and they were sleeping soundly.

Dick and Granby were snoring loudly.

Satisfied that all were sleeping, the principal and Mr. Scragg turned away, and, walking to the ladder, ascended it and entered the garret.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### GRISELDA.

In the morning, before school, Mr. Landon, Mr. Scragg and Monsieur Louvre met together to talk matters over.

They unanimously concluded that it would be folly to mention the matter in the schoolroom, as that would only serve to put the guilty parties on their guard.

They determined to say nothing about it for the present, hoping that the malefactors would let slip a word, presently, which would betray them indirectly.

Monsieur Louvre did not make his appearance in the schoolroom, on account of his eyes, which were still closed, so that he could only see very slightly out of one corner of his left one.

Consequently the affair of the lobster was not brought up.



All went on very smoothly that morning, as though nothing out of the common order had happened.

Dick and Granby were not deceived by this silence, however.

They knew very well that Mr. Scragg and the principal were watching for some sign of the guilty parties, and they were careful not to mention the affair to any one.

If they did not let it out, they had an idea that they were all right, for they did not believe that any one had an inkling of the truth.

Mr. Scragg had been too nearly frightened to death to recognize the sound of Dick's voice, and he had not spoken after the principal had appeared on the scene.

He and Granby were very attentive to their books that morning, and no one would have thought, from their quiet, meek demeanor, that they had been engaged in a row that upset and puzzled the principal and two of his assistants.

"They're going to let the whole thing drop," said Granby, when he and Dick were alone after exercise.

"Don't you believe it," said Dick. "They're only resting on their oars a bit while they see which way the land lies. We've got to be mighty careful, or they will bring us up with a round turn."

"I don't see how," said Granby.

"Nor I, either," replied Dick. "But that doesn't prevent us from keeping a lookout, for all that, does it?"

"No; of course not."

"See that you do it, then. What's next on the roll? We ought to keep 'em stirred up."

"There's one thing you ought to do," said Granby.

"What's that?" asked Dick.

"I'll tell you. You've never been to see and thank the little girl who saved your life, have you?"

"No."

"Well, you ought to go. If it hadn't been for her, you'd have been dead as a herring."

"That's so. We've had so much on hand that I've neglected it. I wonder if Mr. Landon will let me go this afternoon?"

"I don't know, I'm sure; ask him."

"I will. Come along, Granby."

"No; I've got that beastly Latin exercise to copy."

Dick went off to Mr. Landon and asked permission to visit Mr. Long, which, under the circumstances, was readily accorded.

After dinner Dick started off and walked toward the "Willows."

It was a very beautiful place, adjoining the grounds of Stryker's Academy.

Dick rang the bell and was admitted to the library by a servant.

Mr. Long was there, and received him very cordially.

Dick made known his name and errand, and Katie was at once sent for.

She was a very charming girl, Dick thought, and he was very much embarrassed as he attempted to express his deep sense of gratitude to her for saving his life.

Mr. Long, perceiving his embarrassment, helped him out, however, and after the ice was once broken, matters progressed charmingly, and Dick was now at his ease, and

commenced to talk with the freedom of an old acquaintance.

He told them all about himself, and his adventures with Dilks and Botts, and how he came to be at the academy.

"You should be more careful," said Mr. Long. "It may be that Dilks is hanging around the country yet, watching his chance. Such characters are very revengeful, and he will seize every opportunity of doing you an injury."

"I don't think there is any danger, sir," answered Dick. "The country has been pretty well searched for Dilks since his attack on me, and if he had been anywhere in the vicinity he would have been discovered."

"I'm not so certain of that," said Mr. Long. "You must know the country around here abounds in woods, and swamps and thickets, and it would be very easy for Dilks to conceal himself until the pursuit was over. I am not saying this to frighten you, my young friend, only to teach you to be cautious."

"I shall be, sir."

"I don't know about that," said Mr. Long. "You do not look like a boy in whom that trait is especially prominent. You generally act first and think afterward, if I am not mistaken in my estimation of your character."

Mr. Long was exactly right. The worst fault Dick had in the world was his great haste.

He did not pause to consider circumstances before acting.

Consequently he was often led into difficulties which he might have avoided had he exercised only a little amount of discretion and forethought before acting.

When he took his leave he was pressed to make them another visit.

Katie also pressed him to come, and Dick consented willingly.

He took her hand, with the promise to call again soon, and walked back to the academy.

On the right of the road, in a wild part, was a dense, black thicket.

As Dick approached this part of the road he saw a woman step out from the thicket and stand in the center of the road, apparently waiting for him to come up.

As he came near to her he saw that she was an old, slender woman of repulsive aspect.

Her skin was dry and shriveled, and resembled parchment.

Her cheek bones were very high and prominent, her nose was crooked, like the beak of a bird of prey, and her eyes were small and black, and twinkled and shone like little balls of fire.

Her hair was gray, and hung in long and tangled masses over her shoulders.

She stood leaning on a cane, which was made of a rough stick, and was very heavy, short and knotted.

As Dick came up she raised her stick and made a gesture for him to stop.

Dick stood still and looked at her.

She looked at him a little while with eyes that seemed to pierce him through and through, and made him feel very uncomfortable.

Then her mouth was twisted into a kind of smile, dis-



closing her toothless gums, and rendering her appearance more repulsive than ever.

Then, still leaning on her stick, she extended her right hand to him.

"Cross Griselda's palm with silver, my pretty boy," she said, in a hard, croaking voice.

"What's that for?" asked Dick.

"She will tell your fortune," said the old woman—"will tell you secrets of the past, and things that are to occur in the future."

"Oh, bother!" exclaimed Dick.

"Don't you believe it?" cried Griselda. "Only try me, and if I do not prove to you that I possess the power of reading the past and future like an open book, then your silver shall be returned."

"You'll not get any silver from me," said Dick. "I can't afford to pay very liberally for the luxury of being humbugged; but if a nickel will be any inducement for you to open your knowledge box, why, go ahead."

He produced a nickel from his pocket and gave it to the old woman.

Griselda took his hand and seemed to study it very intently for so long a time that Dick's patience became exhausted.

"Go on with your show," he exclaimed, impatiently.

The hag traced a line in the palm of his hand and then looked up into his face.

"Your name is Richard Halladay," said she.

"Right you are," said Dick.

"Your father was a lawyer."

"Correct," said Dick. "Fire away."

"Your mother died while giving birth to you."

"True as a text," replied Dick, beginning to become astonished at Griselda's knowledge, and wondering how she had found out so much about him.

"Do I not know something of the past?" asked Griselda.

"Lobs and gobs. But, I say, Griselda, you've told me only what I knew before. If you want to give me a nickel's worth, tell me something that I don't know."

"I will do it," said Griselda, again consulting the palm of his hand. "It was said that your father died very poor."

"Poor as a churchmouse, old woman. Hadn't a copper to bury him with."

"That is what they said, proceeded Griselda, impressively. "But it was all a lie. Your father had a large amount of money, and they told you he died a pauper so that they might obtain the money for themselves."

"Thunder!" cried Dick, astonished beyond measure.

"It is true," continued Griselda. "The powers that are unseen by you, but who are conjured up by my magic art, reveal it to me. The gold which they stole from you is of large amount, and I can tell you how to recover it and punish the thieves who have it."

"How?" cried Dick, earnestly.

The old woman was about to speak when the noise of wheels was heard.

Looking up, they perceived a carriage coming around a turn in the road.

"The charm is broken," said Griselda, impressively.

"It can only be renewed a second time in darkness. If you would know more, come to me to-night at nine o'clock."

"I will," said Dick, greatly excited. "Where shall I see you?"

"Here."

"Can't you come inside the grounds?"

"No," said Griselda. And then continuing, sneeringly: "Are you afraid?"

"No; I am not afraid. I will come."

"You must come alone."

"I will."

"Be punctual. Nine o'clock is the best hour to conjure up the powers that must assist me."

"All right. I'll be here."

"Say nothing to any living being."

"What's that for?"

"The fates decree it. Do you promise?"

"Yes."

"Good. You shall know more than you dream of."

With this Griselda plunged into the thicket, and Dick pursued his way in a thoughtful mood back to the academy.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### INVESTIGATING MR. SCRAGG'S GHOST.

Granby was waiting for Dick at the gate.

He did not seem particularly happy—indeed, his face wore such a troubled appearance that Dick laughed outright when he saw him.

"Grin away," said Granby, crossly. "You'd laugh on the other side of your mouth if you knew what's happened since you went away."

"What's the row?"

"We're found out, that's all."

"Thunder!"

"It will be lightning, too," said Granby, climbing to the top of the gatepost, and sitting there with his face a yard long.

Dick took it rather more philosophically. He could not understand how they had been found out.

"It's all on account of that man Kelly," continued Granby.

"Oh, you mean about the lobster?" said Dick, feeling relieved.

"I wish that were all," replied Granby. "That was only on Monsieur Louvre, and they don't care much about him. It's the ghost story that's going the rounds, and Kelly's got us into it."

"The little viper!" exclaimed Dick. "What does he know about it?"

"Well, it appears he didn't sleep very soundly, and was awake when we went out from the dormitory, and when we came back also. And he's told the principal that he saw us go out."

"The dickens!"

"Worse than that," said Granby, dolorously.

"Has Mr. Landon said anything to you about it?" asked Dick.

"No. But he asked me a while ago if you had come back from Mr. Long's, and said that when you returned he wished to see us both in the study."

"Let's go and have over with it," said Dick. "I hate suspense."



"Right away?" exclaimed Granby, drawing back.  
 "Of course. What's the use of putting the thing off? It's got to come."

"All right," said Granby, screwing up his courage to the sticking point. "Jog along."

They got down from the gateposts and then went to the house.

On the way they met Stoneby.

He grinned, but said nothing.

The grin exasperated Dick.

"If you don't straighten that face of yours you'll get something that will make you see stars," Dick said, angrily.

"You'll get something to make you see stars," said Stoneby, straightening his face and retiring.

"Maybe you'd like to give it to us?" said Dick, following him up.

"Landon will do it for me," said Stoneby. "It'll be much less trouble."

"Oh, bother! Go doctor your eyes," exclaimed Dick. "Come on, Granby."

Several of the boys had by this time gathered around, but they pushed through the crowd and went to the door of the principal's study and knocked.

"Come in," said Mr. Landon.

They went in, and found the principal alone.

"Oh, Halladay," said he, as if nothing unusual had happened. "You have returned, I see."

"Yes, sir," said Dick, taking off his hat and standing in front of the principal's desk.

"Did you have a pleasant time?"

"Very; thank you, sir."

"Glad of it. Sit down. You, too, Granby."

The boys took a seat.

"Halladay," said Mr. Landon, "where were you last night?"

"In bed, sir," answered Dick.

"I suppose so. But were you nowhere else?"

"Certainly, sir. I had my supper in the supper-room, and after that I was in a good many places before it was time to go to bed."

"Yes, I know. But after you went to bed. How, then?"

"Why, I went to sleep."

"No doubt. But it was not till near morning, in my opinion."

"Sir!" said Dick, innocently.

"You understand well enough what I mean," replied Mr. Landon. "Did you leave your bed last night after you retired?"

Dick hesitated. He had no answer ready. He did not like to tell a direct lie, for, besides conscientious scruples, he ran the risk of being found out, and thus making the affair worse than before.

So he wisely held his peace.

"Now, mind," said the principal, "I do not require any answer from you just yet. We will see what effect a little evidence will have upon you."

He touched a small hand bell on the table, and the door, which had been ajar, opened wide, and Kelly came in.

He came up and stood beside the table, not looking at the boys.

Dick and Granby exchanged glances.

Granby uttered a subdued groan, which made Dick laugh.

"Cease this levity," said Mr. Landon, severely. "You had better be weeping. Kelly, I wish to ask you some questions."

"Yes, sir," answered Kelly, in a cringing tone.

"Kelly," continued the principal, "do you know anything about the actions of these two young gentlemen last night?"

"Yes, sir."

"Please state it."

Dick caught Kelly's eye, and shook his fist at him.

Kelly hesitated.

"Proceed," said Mr. Landon.

"I—I don't like to tell," muttered Kelly.

"You don't like to tell! You were willing enough to come to me and volunteer the information. You should have no hesitation in repeating it if it is true."

"Did you see them leave the room last night?"

"Yes, sir. I did not sleep very well, and I saw them go out. They stayed quite a long time, and then came running back and tumbled into bed. After a little while, you and Mr. Scragg came and looked in, and they commenced to snore. Then you went out again, and after a minute or two they followed. When they ran back again they were laughing all over their faces, and I thought they had been up to something. I went to sleep then, and don't know what happened after."

"Do you deny this?" asked Mr. Landon, eying Dick and Granby sharply.

"No, sir," said Dick.

"Ah! then, you admit it."

"No, sir. I neither deny nor admit it. I haven't anything to say about it."

"Very well. We'll find a way in the morning to make you speak. You may all go now."

They went out into the hall, where, as Kelly passed, Dick seized the opportunity to seize his ear and twist it unmercifully.

Kelly howled.

Presently Dick let go and gave him a kick.

"That isn't half what you'll get for sneaking," said he.

"Now, vamoose!"

Kelly marched off, holding his injured ear and sniveling.

"We're in for it now," said Granby, dolefully.

"Who cares?" said Dick. "Let it come. There goes the supper bell. We'll catch some awful punishment in the morning, so we'll need our stomachs full. Grin and bear it, my boy. That's logic."

## CHAPTER XV.

### DICK SEES STARS.

Although Dick made light of the matter, he did not feel by any means easy in his mind.

He knew that the consequences of the scrapes he had got into would be very heavy, and that when the day of settlement came—which would be in the morning—it would be such as to make him remember and rue the night when he played the ghost in "Hamlet" to Mr. Scragg.



Another thing that troubled him was his promise to Griselda.

He did not half like it.

He could not understand why she had taken such an interest in him.

He was afraid there was some trap in it, although why any one should wish to entrap him he could not imagine.

He was sorry that he had promised Griselda he would say nothing about it.

If Granby knew where he was going he could raise the alarm if anything happened, and they would know where to search.

He had given his word, however, and would not break it.

A little before nine o'clock he crept out of his bed, not even letting Granby know that he was going out, and passed stealthily and silently down the stairs and out of the house.

Griselda was hiding in the thicket, waiting for him.

When she saw him coming she came out and stood in the road.

"You are a brave boy," she said. "I knew you would come. I knew that you were truthful, and would keep your word. I could tell it by the lines of your palm."

"Bosh!" exclaimed Dick, contemptuously. "I was a fool to come."

"What? After the proofs of my power I have given you?" cried Griselda.

"That's all humbug!" said Dick. "You found out all about me somehow."

"How, then, did I know that they were cheating you out of heaps of gold?" asked Griselda.

"I don't believe you found it out," said Dick. "I don't believe a word of it."

"Don't you?" replied Griselda. "Well, you're not so smart, then, as I gave you credit for being."

"Am I not? I think I'm a good deal smarter than you gave me credit for," returned Dick. "I'm so smart that I don't believe in your show."

"I will prove it to you," said Griselda.

"That's the talk. Exhibit the menagerie. Let the lion roar."

"We must go into the thicket," said Griselda.

"What's that for?"

"Because we shall be interrupted here. And when once the charm is broken it cannot be renewed."

Dick looked up into the old hag's evil face.

"Look here, Griselda, are you putting up a job on me?" he asked.

"He is afraid," she chuckled. "Afraid of an old woman. I took him for a brave boy, but he's a coward, after all. Afraid of an old woman. Ha, ha!"

She laughed and chuckled over it in such a sneering manner that Dick began to get angry.

"Who's afraid?" he exclaimed.

"You are," giggled Griselda. "He, he! Afraid of old Griselda, who hasn't strength enough to lift her stick as high as her head."

"There's where you're wrong, old woman," said Dick, boldly. "You're just as far away as if your left leg were a cork one instead of bone."

"Come into the thicket, then," said Griselda. "Come

where nobody will come along and frighten off the shapes which I shall conjure up."

"Bother the conjuration! I don't believe in it. But to show you that I'm not afraid of you or of your shapes, either, I'll go."

Griselda parted the bushes and disappeared within the thicket.

Dick followed her.

She led the way to a glade, or open place, in the interior.

Then she drew a circle on the ground, and made some mystic passes with her stick.

Dick observed her intently.

Suddenly she pointed to the center of the circle.

"Look!" said she. "What do you see?"

Dick bent down close to the ground.

Whack!

The stick descended on his head.

He fell, and for a moment was conscious of nothing except a ringing in his ears.

When he came to his senses he was tightly bound, and Griselda, Dilks and Bogardus were bending over him.

## CHAPTER XVI.

I AM GOING TO HAVE YOU KILLED.

Dick looked up into the face of the trio.

Each wore an air of supreme satisfaction.

Griselda stood leaning on her stick and leering at him.

Dick grinned as though he were highly amused at something.

Bogardus stood smiling smoothly, with his hands in his pockets.

Dick saw at once that he had been led into the trap by Griselda for the purpose of being delivered into the power of Bogardus and Dilks.

He had been foolish enough to walk into the trap against the dictates of his better judgment.

Now, at his leisure, and after the mischief had been done, he repented.

It was too late, however—he was fast in the trap.

Griselda had been too smart for him. He must bear whatever fate befell him, for he had only himself to blame for trusting himself in the power of the old hag.

Of course he understood now that the story of the money was all a farce—a tale invented by Griselda to excite his curiosity and induce him to come to her in the night time.

As Dick opened his eyes Griselda laughed hideously, displaying her toothless gums.

"Hi, hi!" she chuckled, "you thought you were awfully smart, didn't you? Wasn't a bit afraid of old Griselda, who can't lift her cane to her head, was you?"

Dick's head ached, and he had been given proof that the old woman was not only able to lift the stick to her head, but to bring it down again with force enough to knock over a small-sized bullock.

"You needn't have struck so hard," said he. "If you'd only taken the trouble to inform me that you wished me to lie down, I'd have done it."

Griselda laughed.

"That's right," said Dick; "keep it up—do."



"Keep what up?" asked Griselda.

"Yer gum show," replied Dick. "You've got the finest set of gums, minus grinders, with here and there a stump sticking out like a snag in the middle of a mud bed, that I ever saw. Laugh again, Grizzly, dear, do; you look so enchanting."

Griselda seemed a little uneasy.

She did not laugh with such zest.

She raised her cane over Dick's head.

He looked at her unflinchingly.

The blow would have fallen in an instant, and Dick would have been sent again to the land of forgetfulness had not Bogardus caught her arm.

"That will do," said he.

"Let me chastise him."

"Not just now," said Bogardus. "If you hit him on the head again it will knock the sense out of him. Wait till we get him where we want him. When he's at 'the place,' you can take as much out of him as you please. Beat him half to death, if you please, before we finally dispose of him."

Griselda reluctantly lowered the stick.

"Much obliged for that favor," said Dick.

"That's all right," said Bogardus.

"Certainly," replied Dick. "Small favors thankfully received. I say, Bogardus, what's all this for, anyhow?"

"You'll find out when we get you where we want you."

"Where's that?"

"You'll know when you get there."

"Thanks," said Dick, with a grimace. "Your explanation is as clear as mud. Mr. Scragg couldn't beat it."

During this colloquy Dilks had maintained silence, looking, meanwhile, admiringly at Dick.

Now he opened his large mouth.

"Sharp," said he.

Bogardus nodded.

"Bright as a dollar," continued Dilks.

"Yes."

Dilks drew his hand across his throat significantly.

"Pity," said he.

"Must be done," said Bogardus. "It's necessary for my safety."

"Yes," replied Dilks. "But it's a chance, though. What a man could make of him if he'd only turn his hand to light-fingered pursuits."

"Very true, but you couldn't trust him."

"No."

"He's a viper," muttered Griselda. "A snake."

"Oh, you're mad because he can outtalk you," said Dilks. "Your tongue's hung on hinges, but his is double-jointed, and can wag both ways."

Griselda was sullen.

Bogardus turned to Dick.

"We are going to ask you to come with us a short distance," he said.

"All right," said Dick, who, knowing that he could not avoid going, consented very readily.

"Do you see this pistol?" asked Bogardus, exhibiting a seven-shooter.

"A very pretty pepper-box," said Dick, coolly.

"Yes. And I want to give you a little advice about it. If you attempt to run, or make an outcry, one of

the bullets will be sent through your brain. Consequently, for the general welfare of your system, you'd better keep amazingly quiet."

He handed the pistol to Dilks.

"There, Dilks," said he, "take it. There are seven cartridges in it, and I want you to empty the seven chambers into that boy's carcass if he makes the least outcry. Will you do it?"

"Sure as guns," said Dilks.

"I hope you know what's best for you, boy," Bogardus said.

"Don't fret," replied Dick. "I'll go straight enough. What are you going to do with me when you get me there?"

"You'll know when you find out," said Bogardus. "Lift him up, Dilks, and unbind his feet."

Dilks did so.

"Now, lead the way, Griselda," said Bogardus. "I never could find my way back to that infernal den of yours."

Griselda placed herself in the van, and, leaning on her stick and muttering to herself, led the way toward the south.

Dick, Dilks and Bogardus followed.

Dick was in the middle, with Dilks on the left and Bogardus on the right.

Each had hold of Dick's arm, and, as his wrists were tied, there was very little chance of escape.

After what seemed an age to Dick, but what was, in reality, not more than an hour and a half of rapid walking, they arrived at the edge of an immense swamp.

The underbrush and briars grew so thick around its borders that one might almost have walked upon the thick network they produced a dozen feet from the ground.

It was considered an impenetrable swamp.

Indeed, so dense and impassable was it that, when the hunters pursued small game to its borders, and found that it had taken refuge there, they never attempted to pursue, and gave them up as lost, for men could not force their way within, unless, indeed, a passage were cleared with axes, and that would be an endless labor.

And so "Sutton's Swamp," as the place was called, had remained undisturbed for ages, and had grown, and fallen down, and decayed, and renewed itself without interference from the human family, for the wood could not have begun to repay the trouble and expense of reclaiming it from the briars.

Griselda did not appear to wish to avoid this swamp; on the contrary, she stalked steadily toward it.

At the edge she did not pause, but lifting up a network of leaves and twigs, among which green briars with immense thorns were skillfully intertwined, she stood waiting for them to enter.

"Well, I must say, Griselda," said Bogardus, "you can beat me at this sort of business. Although I came out of here this afternoon, I could never have found it again. You did it well."

"As I have many times before, and shall do again," Griselda answered. "Enter."

They went inside the thicket, and found themselves in a small, circular place, which was closed in on all



sides by a thicket of green briars which seemed to be as impenetrable as the outside had appeared.

Griselda went to a certain spot and lifted a portion of the briars up easily, revealing a narrow passage leading into the interior of the swamp.

"Follow me very closely," she said. "It is dark as pitch when you get in a little. Hold fast by my dress, or you will lose me."

Owing to the briars and underbrush growing so high and twining together overhead, the passage was very similar to a tunnel through a rock, and, had it not been for an occasional scratch from briars on the passage, it could not have been told from such.

Griselda's words concerning the darkness were true.

It grew so dark that, as Dick walked between the two men—Dilks ahead of and Bogardus behind him—he could not see either of them.

This offered him no chance of escape, however, for the passage was so narrow that, if he had endeavored, he could not have passed either, and it was impossible to force a passage through the thicket on either side.

If such an idea entered his mind it was abandoned at once.

Dick knew there was nothing to be done except to submit as gracefully as he could, and he did so, walking along very quietly through the passage until they were suddenly brought to a standstill by Griselda's voice exclaiming:

"Stop!"

Dick, who was ahead, stopped with such suddenness that Dilks, who did not take any particular pains to check his speed, came against him with his whole force.

Dilks fell forward against the briars.

When he got up again his face and hands were scratched, and he was swearing.

Dick laughed softly to himself.

"Hurt you much, Mr. Dilks?" he asked.

"Scratched all the hide off my face and hands," growled Dilks.

"Never mind," said Dick. "You know I never check my onward career all at once. Think it hurtful. Jars up a fellow's insides. Always fetch up by degrees, Mr. Dilks, and you'll live longer."

Dilks, while nursing his scratches, muttered some sort of a reply, and Griselda, who had been fumbling in her pocket, produced a key.

Then she pushed some bushes aside and unlocked a door, which, until then, had been concealed by the underbrush.

Then she disappeared, and in a moment a scratching sound was heard as she scraped a match upon the wall, if such the bare sides of the place could be called.

The bright flames of a lamp presently illuminated the apartment and shone through the open door.

Dick saw that he was standing in front of a small cabin, whose existence would not have been suspected by a passer-by, even if he took the trouble to penetrate the thicket, unless he had actually parted the matting of bushes and trees and briars and peered intently through.

The old woman, standing in the open doorway, shading the light with her skinny hands, looked like a specter from Plutonian shores.

She looked hideous enough, thought Dick, to be the wife of Satan.

"Come in," she croaked.

Dilks, who, in a kind of superstitious way, was afraid of her, and had not dared go in uninvited, entered.

Dick followed.

"Sit down," said Bogardus.

Dick obeyed, for he was very tired.

"You asked me some time ago what I was going to do with you," said Bogardus. "I have no objection in telling you now. I am going to have you killed."

## CHAPTER XVII.

### IN THE SWAMP.

Dilks looked at Dick intently to see how he would receive this intelligence.

Bogardus looked intently at him.

Griselda leaned both hands on her stick and looked at him and chuckled.

But they observed no sign of fear from Dick, who remained perfectly tranquil.

"Are you?" he asked.

"Certain," said Dilks, placing his finger to his throat by way of illustration.

"Well, that's all right," said Dick.

Dilks eyed him open-mouthed.

Bogardus also was astonished.

"You don't seem to mind it much," said Dilks.

"What's the use?" replied Dick. "I can't change it, can I?"

"No," answered Bogardus; "you can't change it."

"And there's no use making a fuss over spilled milk," said Dick. "What can't be cured must be endured; therefore—you finish it for me, Mr. Dilks."

"Therefore you'll take what's coming without any fuss," replied Dilks.

"That's the best."

"Certainly. 'Twon't hurt long. Just as soon as the knife slits your windpipe and your breath stops, you'll commence to choke to death, as well as bleed. That'll end twice as quick, you know."

Dilks said this on purpose to make Dick shudder.

He did not succeed.

Instead, Dick laughed at him.

"It will be many a long day before you do that," said Dick.

Dilks looked at him in undisguised admiration.

"It's a confounded shame," said he.

"What?" said Dick.

"To cut your throat."

"Well, don't do it, then."

"Must I?"

"Why?"

"Captain's orders."

"Who's your captain?"

Dilks pointed to Bogardus.

"That's him," said he. "Look here, boy, would you take to my trade if I'll let you go?"

"What's that—stealing for a living?"

"Yes."

"I'll think about it."

"That'll do," said Bogardus, sternly, turning to Dilks.



"He's smart enough to make the promise to save his life, but you know very well he would not keep it."

"That's true," grumbled Griselda. "Do not let the young viper go; kill him."

"Exactly," returned Bogardus.

"Perhaps you'll let me know why it is that I've got to die?" said Dick.

"It will do no harm, as you will never go beyond the limits of this swamp," replied Bogardus.

"Fire away," said Dick, easily.

"You seem to take it coolly."

"That's the best way, when you can't help it."

"Very true. You're a philosopher."

"He's a game 'un," said Dilks.

"The first thing I shall inform you," continued Bogardus, "is that my real name is not Bogardus at all, and that I am the nephew of Mr. Pemberton."

"Oh!" exclaimed Dick, a light beginning to dawn upon his mind.

"Of course, if you are in the way, and go back to his home, I should never dare go back there, for you would let me out. That's the reason I have caught you."

"A fine, loving nephew you are," exclaimed Dick, "to plan to rob your uncle's house."

"He would never have missed it," said Bogardus. "He is rich."

"He wouldn't have been so rich now if it hadn't been for me," said Dick.

"Well, your intelligence will cost you your life."

"I am willing, if it has foiled such a villain as you!"

"Are you? I am glad you are suited. Dilks, you are to put the finishing touch to this thing, I believe."

"Yes," said Dilks.

"What do you mean by the finishing touch?" asked Dick.

"A slit in your throat," replied Dilks.

Dick shuddered in spite of himself.

The idea was too horrible.

To be thrown down on the floor like an animal and killed while struggling.

The thought was terrible, and caused a feeling of sickness to pass through him.

"When shall you do it?" asked Bogardus.

"To-morrow."

"I want my satisfaction first," snarled Griselda, looking like a tigress at Dick.

Dick had by this time recovered from his momentary sickness.

"What might your satisfaction be, old Witch of Endor?" he asked.

Griselda smiled savagely.

"I'll show you," said she.

"Propel," said Dick, who knew there was no use showing the white feather.

"I will," said Griselda. "Do you see this stick?"

Dick nodded.

"I'm going to beat you with it until I tire myself out."

"Fire away. Don't deny yourself any amusement on my account."

Griselda was about to begin the castigation when Dilks interfered.

Walking up to Griselda, he wrenched the stick from her and threw it through the open door.

"Let him alone," said he. "The boy's got to die, and he's too brave a fellow to be mauled half to death first by an old hag."

Griselda sank into a chair, cowed and muttering, and Dilks raised Dick in his arms and carried him up a ladder and through a trapdoor into a room above, where he threw him down upon the floor.

Then he went away without a word, closed the trapdoor, and left Dick alone in the dark.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### IN THE GARRET.

Although Dick had shown no signs of the white feather, still, it must not be supposed that he felt no fear.

On the contrary, he recognized the extreme peril of his situation.

He saw that it was one which would require all his ingenuity to escape from, if, indeed, escape were possible.

The place where Dilks had thrown Dick, after first rebinding his feet, was an ordinary garret.

It was very low, being nothing more than the triangle formed by the roof, the sides of the houses not extending above the floor.

There was no window, and the only light was provided by the glimmer of the lamp through the cracks between the floor boards.

Dick did not relish the idea of being tied up like an animal awaiting the pleasure of the butcher for the slaughter.

Indeed, he was awaiting the pleasure of his butcher, and the butcher was Dilks.

He would kill him without compunction.

Dick began to make tremendous efforts to free himself.

Through the cracks in the floor he could hear Bogardus and Griselda urging Dilks to go up and do the deed at once, and have it over.

Dilks, however, steadily refused.

Dick felt his bonds yielding.

The continued strain was stretching the cords so that he could work his wrists a little.

This gave him encouragement.

His wrists were bleeding.

The flesh was cut and swollen.

The pain was so great as to cause him an effort at times to repress a groan, which would have alarmed the guilty trio below, and sent Dilks up to see what was the trouble.

He worked on very patiently, and at last was rewarded by freeing his hands by a sudden wrench.

He was released.

Yet what good did that do him?

There was no window in the garret through which he could escape.

If he undertook to make a hole through the roof, the noise would be heard by the parties below, and they would be upon him in an instant.

His case seemed as hopeless as ever.

Creeping to the chink in the flooring, he peered through.

Bogardus, Dilks and Griselda were sitting still, staring vacantly at the lamp, which burned dimly.

Dilks was nodding.



Griselda's eyes were half closed.  
 Bogardus was drowsy.  
 Dick hailed this with joy.  
 If they would only go to sleep, he might open the trap, descend, and pass out without disturbing them.  
 If they would only go to sleep!  
 Upon that depended Dick's life.  
 Dilks sat by the table.  
 Presently his head dropped upon it.  
 He slept.  
 Griselda's eyes were closed.  
 She also was in the land of dreams.  
 Bogardus, despite his inclination to keep awake, let his chin drop on his breast.  
 Dick had observed all this through the chink.  
 Now was his time.  
 He arose without the least particle of noise, and, going to the trap, raised it carefully.  
 He looked down.  
 They still slept.  
 The opening of the trap had not made sufficient noise to awaken them.  
 Griselda alone stirred uneasily, but slept on.  
 Dick went down the ladder.  
 He stood on the floor.  
 The door was closed and locked.  
 Griselda moaned.  
 Dick dropped down.  
 The hag became quiet.  
 Dick crept toward the door.  
 His heart beat painfully.  
 He reached upward toward the key.  
 It turned hard, and the bolt gave out a dismal, creaking sound.  
 Dilks half raised his head from the table.  
 Dick uttered a low groan of despair and gave up all for lost.  
 But the hold of slumber was too strong upon Dilks.  
 He did not thoroughly awake.  
 His head drooped down upon the table and again he slept soundly.  
 Dick arose and opened the door.  
 He was very nervous, and did it too quickly, instead of by slow degrees, as he should have done, to avoid noise.  
 The door was loose on its hinges.  
 It came down upon the floor and grated across it with a loud, rasping sound.  
 Griselda's snakelike eyes opened wide.  
 She uttered an exclamation.  
 With a wildly beating heart, Dick sprang through the open doorway and out into the darkness.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### HUNTED.

As Dick sprang into the thicket, he heard Griselda's voice as she called out to Dilks and Bogardus.

He knew they would be after him in an instant, and that all depended on his getting out of the passage before he was discovered.

He was obliged to run at random for the passage.  
 Luckily he struck it.

He did not have time to feel his way, but dashed forward at full speed.

The briars scratched his face and tore his hands, but he ran on, until suddenly he ran plump against a barrier of briars.

He was some time extricating himself from these, and he could hear Dilks, Bogardus and Griselda hurrying along the passage after him.

The briars with which he had come in contact were the outlet into the opening which Griselda had first entered when they penetrated the thicket.

Dick knew that Griselda had lifted them up, and he endeavored to do the same thing.

He could not do it, however.

His pursuers were coming closer every moment, and as he looked back he saw that they were carrying a lamp.

He lifted with all his strength at the briars, but they hardly moved.

It was plain that they were fastened at the bottom.

Realizing that it was impossible for him to find his way out before they came up, he looked around for some hiding place.

Getting down on his hands and knees, he searched by the sense of feeling.

Close to the ground, on the right side of the passage, he felt a narrow opening.

Lying flat upon the ground, he wormed his body in among the briars until he was completely hidden from view.

Not an instant too soon.

Dilks, Bogardus and Griselda came hurrying up.

Bogardus was leading and carrying the lamp.

Dilks came second, with a large knife open in his hand.

Griselda brought up the rear, muttering anathemas and describing vicious curves in the air with her stick.

Dick would find very little mercy in them if he were caught.

Bogardus paused when he reached the curtain of briars.

He could not remove it any more than Dick could.

Griselda hurried forward.

She stooped down and fumbled at the bottom of the barrier.

Dick, peering out from his covert, saw, by the light of the lamp which Bogardus held close to the ground, that she untwisted a running vine from a large root.

That was what had confined the curtain.

She now lifted it easily, and they passed out without uttering a word.

Dick lay perfectly quiet.

His hope of escaping from the thicket was to wait until they gave up the search and returned to Griselda's cabin.

Once out of the thicket, he had no fear.

He knew that, in the open woods, his chances of escape would be a hundred to one.

Presently he heard footsteps.

It was Griselda and her two companions returning.

They entered the passage and stood directly opposite where Dick was concealed.

He lay still and watched and listened.

By the light of the lamp he could see them plainly.

Had it not been for that he could not have seen an object six inches from him, for the thicket was so dense that within it was dark as pitch.



They seemed to be divided in opinion.

Bogardus and Dilks were of the opinion that Dick had escaped.

Griselda denied this vehemently.

It was impossible, she said.

He had not left the thicket.

The barrier was fastened down on the inside exactly as she had left it when they all entered earlier that night, leaving Dick a prisoner.

If he had escaped that way, he could not have unfastened the vine from the root.

There was no other avenue of escape from the thicket.

Consequently, Griselda argued, he must be somewhere within, hidden among the briars.

This reasoning, although logical, did not appear to have much effect on Dilks.

He would have it that Dick had escaped, and persisted in the belief that they could not recapture him.

He counseled immediate evacuation of the thicket, before Dick led a force to the swamp and unearthed them.

Bogardus would not listen to this.

"What do you intend to do, then?" asked Dilks.

"Guard the entrance to the thicket until morning, and then beat the place until we find him," answered Bogardus.

"Very well. You and Griselda go in the cabin and get some sleep, and I'll watch at the entrance."

"No, you'll not!" answered Bogardus, tartly.

"Why not?" asked Dilks.

"Because it's all your fault that he got away. You didn't tie him tight enough, and you went to sleep."

"So did you," retorted Dilks.

"No matter. You were hired to do the affair, while I could do as I pleased."

"I believe he's glad that the young villain's gone," croaked Griselda.

"You shut up, old hag, or I'll pitch you into the green briars and scratch your eyes out," growled Dilks, becoming angry that the blame should be turned on his shoulders, when the others were as much at fault as he.

Griselda was silent.

She was afraid of Dilks, who generally made his threats good.

A bed of thorns would not be as comfortable as one of down.

Griselda had discretion enough to keep quiet while Dilks was in his present state of mind.

Dilks' anger was up.

"Look here," he said, turning to Bogardus and scowling, "you want to put all the blame on me. I don't propose to shoulder it."

"Good!" thought Dick, behind the bushes. "If they quarrel among themselves and break up, I'm all right."

"What do you propose to do?" asked Bogardus.

"Drop the whole matter right here!" exclaimed Dilks. "Get out of this infernal swamp as quickly as I can and back to my crib in New York."

This alarmed Bogardus, who knew that Dilks meant what he said.

Without Dilks they could do nothing.

Besides, Dilks knew too many of Bogardus' secrets to be made an enemy.

Instead, he must be propitiated.

Dilks made a very good friend, but a dangerous enemy.

Bogardus recognized that, and acted accordingly.

He affected to make light of the whole affair.

"That's all right," said he. "I was only joking. Of course you were no more at fault than the rest of us. We were all to blame."

"That's so," said Dilks, who, when Bogardus acknowledged himself equally to blame, was willing to assume his share of the responsibility. "Neither of us should have gone to sleep. I ought to have knifed the brat when I had him, without waiting a minute. When we get him he'll suffer in a hurry."

"Wait till you get him," muttered Dick.

"Well, what's to be done now?" asked Dilks. "There's no use standing here."

"Did you say there is no other passage from this thicket except this, Griselda?" asked Bogardus.

"Yes," replied Griselda. "I said so; and I said what is the truth."

"You are certain of it?"

"I am certain that no one can get out of this place, in any other direction, except by the aid of an ax to clear a path."

"And you are certain that the boy did not go out this way?"

"As certain as that I live."

"Then he must be in the thicket, concealed somewhere."

"Yes."

"Very good," said Bogardus. "He cannot escape. We'll have him in the morning. I suppose there is no use searching for him to-night, Griselda."

"No," replied the old woman. "While we're searching somewhere else he might make his escape by the passage."

"Very true. You and Dilks go back to the cabin and go to sleep. I will stay by the outer entrance and make sure that he doesn't get away."

"I'd just as soon stay," said Dilks, whom the attempt at propitiation had rendered amicable.

"No," replied Bogardus. "I am not at all sleepy. You do as I tell you."

Dilks and Griselda turned away and went back along the passage to the hut, while Bogardus, after remaining quiet a moment, lifted up the curtain of briars and, taking the lamp with him, passed out of Dick's sight.

Dick's situation was very trying.

He was at liberty and yet a captive.

He had certainly escaped from the hut, and yet his situation was hardly better than when he lay bound in the attic, for he would be hunted for in the morning, as soon as it became light enough to see, and found and dragged from his hiding place.

Then they would show him little mercy.

They would kill him like a wild beast.

They would hunt him in the morning as wild animals are hunted, and when found they would slay him as wild animals are slain.

There was no way of escape except by the entrance.

And over that Bogardus stood guard.

He was a strong man, and could overpower Dick, if he once caught hold of him, in a second.

Dick lay still a long time under the bushes, and thought.

It was a matter of life or death with him to solve this problem.

He could think of no plan which appeared feasible.



Day would break soon, and with it would come Dilks and Griselda searching for him, while Bogardus guarded the place of exit from the swamp.

There was no other plan except to endeavor to pass Bogardus undiscovered in the darkness.

This seemed almost madness, for Bogardus had a light, and would be almost sure to see him if he was stationed anywhere in the narrow passage.

But the madness would not be so great as to lie quiet and allow them to find and butcher him by daylight without making an effort for escape.

If he failed, his situation could not be worse than at present.

It meant death in either case.

Better death while striving for freedom.

So Dick crept out from under the briars and stood in the passage.

Griselda had not refastened the vine to the root, and it was an easy matter to lift the barrier.

He extended himself on the ground, and, raising the lower edge a little, looked out.

Bogardus was not in the circular opening, for if he had been the light would have shown.

He was no doubt waiting at the outer opening.

Dick crept through, walked across the glade and peered through the outer curtain of branches and briars.

Bogardus was there.

He was standing upright, exactly in the center of the passage.

It was impossible to pass by stealth.

Dick determined on a bold move.

## CHAPTER XX.

### CONCLUSION.

Stooping down, Dick felt along the ground for a stone. He found a small one.

It was a rock, hard and firm, and capable of being thrown quite a distance.

Drawing aside the barrier a little distance, he threw the stone.

It went over Bogardus' head, and fell into the bushes a little way behind him.

This was designed to attract Bogardus' attention in the opposite direction.

It succeeded.

Bogardus turned and looked toward the spot where the stone fell.

He held the lamp above his head, so that the light would fall directly upon that spot, and observed it intently.

Now was Dick's chance.

Drawing aside the briars noiselessly he crept toward Bogardus.

When close to him, he sprang forward like a tiger, striking Bogardus in the back and sending him floundering among the briars.

The light was knocked from his hand and immediately extinguished.

Springing over him, Dick shot out from the passage into the weeds and ran for dear life.

As soon as Bogardus could extricate himself from the tenacious grasp of the clinging vines, he sprang up and, with loud shouts, designed to alarm Dilks and Griselda in the hut, he sprang after him.

Dick had little fear now, however.

It was dark as pitch, and pursuers might have stood within ten feet of him and never seen him.

Besides, he had a good start, and if he could not escape now, barring accidents, he deserved to be killed.

Bogardus ran like an elephant, crashing like mad through the underbrush, puffing and blowing, and uttering cries for Dilks and Griselda.

On the contrary, Dick went more slowly, and made scarcely any noise.

The advantage of this was that, while Dick knew the position of Bogardus, the latter was entirely in the dark regarding his movements.

Bogardus ran in a direct line.

To avoid him Dick turned off at right angles.

Bogardus did not hear him, and ran straight on.

Consequently he ran further from Dick each moment. Presently the sound of his footsteps died entirely away.

Had the night been clear, so that Dick could have taken his bearings, it would have been the easiest matter in the world for him to retrace his steps to the academy.

It was very dark, however. Not a star shone, and he could not see the formation of the trees.

Therefore, he had no means of determining the proper direction.

If he kept on he would be as likely to go back where he started from as anywhere else.

The best plan for him to pursue was to remain quiet until daybreak.

The first gleam of the rising sun would show him the direction.

He could then start for the academy and run no risk of going wrong.

He thought that he had run a mile since leaving the swamp.

He was leaning against a tree, and he determined to climb it.

Even if pursuers passed under it, they would not see him.

Up he went, and ensconced himself securely among the branches.

As he had supposed, daylight was not far distant.

Day broke presently, and, as he saw which direction was east, he descended from his tree.

He knew that the academy must lie in very nearly a northerly direction from the swamp.

Accordingly, he kept the sun on his right hand, bringing his face to the north, and marched ahead.

He proceeded very cautiously, for he well knew that Dilks, Bogardus and Griselda would be on the lookout.

He knew, also, that they would not hesitate to shoot him down if they caught sight of him.

As he walked, he looked around on either side to prevent a surprise.

He approached it very carefully.

It was well for him that he did so.

In the center of the glade stood Dilks and Griselda.

Bogardus was nowhere to be seen.



Dilks stood silent and gloomy, Griselda was wide awake.

Her sharp black eyes roved around on every side continually.

On a sudden they rested on the spot where Dick stood. If Griselda saw him it would make trouble.

There would be a chase, with very doubtful results.

Griselda had not seen him, for her eyes rested on another spot presently, and she appeared to be scrutinizing it.

Dick moved off cautiously.

When he judged that she was beyond hearing he quickened his steps, for he wished to be well out of that dangerous locality.

Bogardus, not being in the opening, it was certain that he must be scouring the wood somewhere in the vicinity.

Therefore, to avoid a surprise by him, it was necessary to proceed with great caution.

All this time, however, he continued to walk in a direct line toward the academy.

It was several hours before he arrived in sight of the gate.

Some one was leaning on it, looking up and down the road.

It was Granby.

"Fine morning," said Dick, as he shook hands with Granby as coolly as if nothing had happened.

Granby eyed Dick from head to foot.

"You're the worst-looking specimen I ever saw," he returned. "You're all torn to shreds, and look as if you hadn't had any sleep for a week."

"That's all right," replied Dick. "I've been out on a jamboree."

"Eh?"

"On a midnight excursion to Sutton's Swamp. Haven't time to tell you about it now. I want to get a force an' capture the infernal scoundrels. Come along to the principal."

Granby went with him, and they proceeded to Mr. Landon's room, where they found the principal.

"Ah, Halladay," said he, severely, "you have returned, I see. Give an account of yourself."

Dick related his adventure.

"Do you think we can capture them if we go to the swamp?" asked Mr. Landon.

"If we go at once, I think we can, sir."

"Then we will go at once. I will send to the town for the officers, and we will go to the swamp."

Presently Mr. Scragg, whom Mr. Landon had sent to the town, returned, and after the officers had listened to Dick's story they at once started for the swamp, Dick going with them as pilot.

Granby begged permission to go also, but it was refused, on the ground that there was danger, and the pupils, being placed under the principal's protection, must not be subjected to it unnecessarily.

So, much against his will, Granby was compelled to stay at home.

Dick had no difficulty in piloting them to the swamp.

The difficulty was in finding the entrance to Griselda's hut.

He found it, however, after a short search.

Four of the officers were placed at the entrance to intercept Dilks and Bogardus, if they should succeed in eluding those who entered.

This being arranged satisfactorily, Dick led the way into the thicket.

They went very quietly, until they reached a point close by the hut.

"You stay here," whispered Dick to the officer. "I'll go on a little further and see if they are at the hut."

The man stopped, and Dick went on a little further; to a point from which he could see the door of Griselda's hut.

It was open, and through it he could see Dilks, Bogardus and Griselda, standing in the middle of the room, engaged in earnest conversation.

They were evidently just on the point of decamping.

Dick returned to the men.

"They are all in the cabin," said he. "Come on as still as mice. We'll surprise 'em."

Following his lead, they approached the hut.

When nearly there one of the men stumbled and fell.

He was up again instantly, but the inhabitants of the hut had heard the noise.

"Trapped!" exclaimed Dilks. "Run for it!"

They sprang outside and ran for the passage, hoping to force their way through.

But the officers were too quick for them.

Springing upon them, they threw them down and bound their arms.

Griselda, meanwhile, was stealing away unnoticed.

Dick caught her and held fast, although she fought viciously, scratching like a tiger cat.

Bogardus and Dilks raved and stormed terribly, but it was of no use, and they were marched back to Stryker-ville and lodged in jail.

In due time their trial came on, and each was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

Griselda pleaded guilty without the formality of a trial, and on that account was sentenced for a much shorter term.

Dick was now the lion of the school. He was made quite a hero of by the boys.

Immediately after the affair in the swamp he was sent home for a short vacation to recover from the effects of the severe excitement which he had undergone.

When he returned he was accompanied by Tony, Mr. Pemberton's son, with whom and Granby he played many a trick and fell into many a scrape.

THE END.

The next issue, No. 65, will contain "Slow and Sure; or, From the Sidewalk to the Shop," by Horatio Alger, Jr. This is a most interesting account of the rise of Paul Hoffman from a street vendor to the proprietor of a store. No one who has read any of Mr. Alger's stories needs to be told of their fascination, and in this one there is not a dull page from beginning to end.



# DIAMOND DICK, Jr., WEEKLY

*Tales of Western Adventure*

**32 Large-Sized Pages**

**5c.**

**Handsome Colored**

**Covers**

---

The Diamond Dick Weekly contains the best tales of Western life ever written. They detail the adventures of Diamond Dick and his clever son Bertie, who protect the weak and maintain law and order on our western plains. Do not fail to read them.

---

## LATEST NUMBERS

- 377—Diamond Dick, Jr., and the Gamblers;  
or, Fighting the Poker Sharks.
- 378—Diamond Dick, Jr., at Three-Ply Tavern;  
or, More Work for Law-and-Order.
- 379—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s, Fight With the Flames;  
or, The Last Struggle With the Black Legs.
- 380—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Snow-Shoe Chase;  
or, Warm Work at Freeze-Out Pass.
- 381—Diamond Dick, Jr., at Rocket City;  
or, Handsome Harry's Fireworks.
- 382—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Prize Package;  
or, Saved From the Blizzard.
- 383—Diamond Dick, Jr., Snowed In;  
or, Brick-Top Ben's Quick Work.
- 384—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Manhood;  
or, A Hot Time at Racerville.
- 385—Diamond Dick, Jr.'s Ice Boat Special;  
or, The Perilous Cruise of the Dashaway.
- 386—Diamond Dick, Jr., to the Front;  
or, The Queerest Diamond Mine in the World.

---

**To be had from all newsdealers, or sent by the publishers  
upon receipt of price.**

***STREET & SMITH, 238 William Street, New York***